RADIANCE

A Quarterly Forum for Kriya Yoga Initiates

January – March 2004

PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA
1893 – 1952

That practitioner of yoga [samadhi] whose mind is peaceful, whose emotions are calm, and who is established in purity, awakens to the highest bliss. Constantly practicing yoga [samadhi], that devotee freed from all restraints easily has realization of God that bestows boundless happiness. – *Bhagavad Gita 6:27,28*

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Written by Roy Eugene Davis
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The Ultimate Purpose of Yoga Practice

ultimate The farthest possible extent. Utmost. Final.
yoga Absolute (pure) oneness-consciousness (samadhi).

The truth seekers in whose awareness of knowledge of yoga and its practices emerged more than five thousand years ago had as their ultimate aim the liberation of their consciousness. The various yogic practices (hatha, bhakti, karma, jnana, and raja) are preparatory methods that can cause psychological transformation, refine the physical body and nervous system, and clarify awareness. The final result of right practice is realization with knowledge of one's true nature as pure consciousness. All of the useful yogic practices together comprise the intentional path of kriya yoga (effective actions that enable unmodified samadhi to be accomplished).

The Sanskrit word *samadhi* is used to describe realization of absolute (pure) oneness-consciousness. When the changes that commonly occur in ordinary, everyday awareness cease and one remains alert, samadhi is realized.

Preliminary samadhi states are still modified because of being mixed with influences of ordinary awareness. When absolute consciousness is realized, one discerns the difference between Self-realization and the ordinary states of awareness that were formerly experienced.

This ultimate realization is much different (and liberating) from what most practitioners of yogic procedures imagine as being possible for them or unto which they aspire. Among the millions of people who are involved with yogic practices, only a very few know what the final purpose of their endeavors should be, and fewer still have that as their goal.

The reason why so few have complete Self-realization as their aim is that they are firmly attached to ordinary states of aware-

ness and the mental attitudes and behaviors which are impelled by them. They presume themselves to be limited by their egocentric awareness and have spiritual enlightenment as a far-off, hoped-for attainment instead of fervently aspiring to be fully, spiritually awake as soon as possible.

There are many kriya yoga students and initiates who do not yet understand what this path requires of them. They may think that kriya yoga practice is only using meditation techniques. They are not aware that *complete* kriya yoga practice, as defined by Patanjali (yoga-sutras 2:1) includes mental attitude adjustment; orderly, appropriate, constructive behaviors; study of higher realities; and surrender (purification and transcendence) of ego (ordinary self-conscious awareness). Effective kriya yoga practice, requires alert, concentrated attention and complete, willing participation.

This path should not be entered into without knowledge of what participation involves. Individuals who request to be initiated into kriya yoga practices should know that initiation is a "new beginning," an occasion when one should be willing to make radical changes in thinking and lifestyle if beneficial results are to be experienced. If this is not understood, if one is not willing to be committed to intensive study and diligent application of what is learned, initiation is only a meaningless event rather than a transformative experience.

At the time of initiation, along with instruction in lifestyle and meditation practices, the initiate is invited into the stream of grace that flows through the enlightened gurus (teachers) of the kriya yoga tradition. That this stream of grace exists and is supportive and redemptive is known to all who are attuned to it. While our lineage of gurus (Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswar, and Paramahansa Yogananda) have been and are conduits through which grace flows, the current, and the actions, of grace are impersonal because they flow from the Source: the field of supreme, pure Consciousness.

The two ways which enable flawless Self-realization to be actualized are mentioned in Patanjali's yoga-sutras (1:12,13).

> Fluctuations and modifications in the individualized field of awareness can be restrained, restricted, and removed by meditation practice and dispassionate nonattachment.

1. Meditation is practiced by intentional removal of attention from external conditions and from physical, emotional, and mental states while directing it to the object or ideal on which one chooses to contemplate (look at or examine with alert expectation of discovery). While preparatory practices may be used to relax the body and calm the emotions and mind, clarification of awareness should be the aim. When awareness is clarified and the meditator remains alert, Self-realization spontaneously occurs. This samadhi is superior to "lower" or preliminary states of samadhi mixed with feelings, thoughts, or subjective perceptions of one or more kinds (light, visions, blissful sensations, or any partial insights which may be had).

2. Dispassionate (objective and unemotional) nonattachment should be practiced when meditating and when involved in ordinary activities. The way to do this is to use the intellect and intuition to discern the difference between all that occurs in your awareness (thoughts, mental attitudes, memories, and emotional states) and you as the observer. Also, calmly and dispassionately observe events and circumstances that exist in your environment and in the world.

With practice, your awareness will not be ordinary: you will be able to abide in Self-knowledge. When you are established in Self-knowledge, you will also be able to have perceptions and accurate knowledge of the reality of God.

Dialogue

The Traditions, Philosophy & Practices of Kriya Yoga

Your questions, inquiries and comments are requested for possible inclusion in our ongoing dialogue. Use the enclosed response form, fax 706-782-4560 or e-mail csainc@csa-davis.org

I am determined to be Self-realized in this incarnation. I was initiated by you last year. I would like for you to be my guru. What should I do now?

Since you have asked, I accept you as a disciple (learner) in our kriya yoga tradition. Continue to study, endeavor to live with alert intention, and regularly practice meditation. Know that you are connected with our lineage of gurus.

Nurture your aspiration to be Self- and God-realized with unwavering devotion. Communicate with me whenever you want or need help with your spiritual practices.

I can see the light of the spiritual eye using yoni (jyoti) mudra, but cannot penetrate it. Is there anything else I can do?

When the light is seen, let your attention be attracted to it. Also listen to Om. Feel that you are merging in the light and in Om. Don't "try" to do this; *relax* into light and sound.

When you first met Paramahansa Yogananda, in what stage of spiritual awakening was he at that time? Was he liberated?

Your inquiry is in regard to the seven levels of awakening: 1) no spiritual awareness; 2) dysfunctional self-consciousness; 3) functional self-consciousness; 4) Self-knowledge; 5) cosmic conscious states; 6) God-consciousness; 7) complete spiritual enlightenment. Paramahansaji was always God-conscious and was (is) fully liberated. His consciousness, words, and physical body radiated purity and quiet, spiritual power.

Provide specific examples of psychological transformation.

Pessimism is replaced by optimism; fear by confidence and courage; doubt by faith; apathy by enthusiasm and a sense of meaningful purpose for one's life; restlessness by calmness; addictive tendencies by ease in making wise choices; and self-centered awareness by Self-knowledge. All neurotic attitudes and behaviors are easily renounced.

Although psychological transformation naturally occurs as we become spiritually aware, wholesome mental attitudes, stable emotional states, and constructive behaviors can (and should) be intentionally cultivated.

Note: Review verses 29 to 45, chapter two, Patanjali's yoga-sutras, in *A Guide to Kriya Yoga Practice, Life Surrendered in God,* or *The Path of Light.*

After practicing kriya pranayama, should I wait for a period of time before going to bed to sleep?

Experiment. If you can easily sleep after meditating, do so. If you are unable to easily go to sleep, change your meditation schedule to accommodate your needs.

What is your opinion about donating physical organs or tissues to benefit others after our transition?

This is a matter of personal choice. If you want to do it, it will be a compassionate act. You need not feel that you are selfish if you are not inclined to do it.

Your answer to someone's question regarding the existence of angels was not clear. Do they, or do they not, exist?

The idea of angels as God's helpers emerged centuries ago in several cultures. I have not seen, or heard of, any evidence that angels are real. Many people who believe that they exist say that

their belief strengthens their faith. I recommend that we have faith in God and God's grace.

You have occasionally mentioned that we should do what we can to share information about this spiritual path with others. What are some ways we can do this?

Avoid useless talk and endeavor by being sure that those with whom you share it will be receptive.

- Give them a copy of *Truth Journal* or one of my books.
- Invite them to attend our retreats or seminars.
- Provide our web site address (www.csa-davis.org).
- Give a copy of *Radiance* to kriya initiates you know.
- When I am scheduled to visit your community to present a meditation seminar, distribute seminar brochures and posters to inform others about the program. Every CSA member and kriya initiate should do this. (See page 15) Many of our members and kriya initiates are not responsive to the spiritual needs of others in their communities. When we send form letters to announce meditation seminars in various cities, only a small percentage of persons to whom the letters are sent request brochures or posters for their communities. Let's be enthusiastic about allowing others to know about our programs!
- Support our advertising and free literature distribution endeavors with your donations. The financial support of caring CSA members and kriya initiates makes possible our outreach that serves truth seekers in North America and many countries.

Note: If you are primarily affiliated with a kriya organization other than Center for Spiritual Awareness, give it most of your financial support. Donate to CSA only to help with the cost of printing and mailing the literature we send to you.

Babaji told Paramahansa Yogananda (in 1920, just before my guru left India to come to America) that in our current era the kriya yoga teachings would be widely spread for the benefit of many people. Although millions of people have already been informed about kriya yoga practices, there are millions more who need to be informed. We may not reach millions, but we can, and should, do our utmost to reach out to everyone we are able to contact and to serve.

Remember: be sure that those whom you attempt to help are receptive. Provide information, then let them continue their studies and practices in accord with their inclinations. It is best to avoid lengthy philosophical discussions. What they learn, and practice, will produce the most useful results for them.

Someone told me that a spiritually advanced teacher has had a few physical problems recently. His followers say that he is not allowed to use his exceptional powers (siddhis) for healing or any other personal purpose, but only for others. Is this true?

We use our "ordinary" knowledge and abilities to maintain our health and overall well-being and to accomplish purposes that are useful; why should we not use exceptional abilities if we have them? All of the functional powers that we have can be wisely used. We are foolish or superstitious if we do not use them. They should not be used to satisfy any ego-impelled desires or whims or to manipulate or dominate others. When our ego (our sense of individual selfhood) is purified, we will always use our knowledge and abilities constructively for our own benefit and to benefit others.

In the third chapter of the yoga-sutras, some exceptional powers of perception and functional abilities that we might have or acquire are described—with the admonition that they are to be primarily used to complete our spiritual awakening to the stage of liberation of consciousness.

How long should a kriya initiate meditate every day?

Meditate for as long as needed to accomplish what you aspire to accomplish. While Self- and God-realization may not be immediately actualized, at least continue until the mind is calm and your awareness is clear. By meditating until a superconscious state is experienced, your meditative skills will improve, your confidence will increase, and you will cheerfully look forward to meditating every day. Your anticipation of having enjoyable results will enable you to quickly flow into meditation when you sit to do it. The superconscious states that prevail after meditation will purify your mind and intellect and enliven and refine your body.

During the blessing of individuals at the end of an initiation service, when you put your hand on their head, what are you actually thinking about, or doing?

I do not actively think or try to do anything. I am aware of being a representative of our gurus so that grace can flow.

When I was initiated by Paramahansaji (August 1950), he announced to everyone who participated, "When I touch your spiritual eye, I see the light go into you. I give you everything! It is up to you to receive it."

When conditions are ideal, at the moment of blessing the new initiate receives an impulse of grace and is motivated to be firmly committed to intentional, concentrated practice on the spiritual path. Several times, on various occasions, I heard my guru say, "Your spiritual evolution is quickened when you concentrate on essential matters."

While I understand the usefulness of adhering to the practices of our kriya yoga tradition and I endeavor to do it, I don't want to become small-minded in regard to the useful practices of other traditions.

Be faithful (devoted) to your practices and respect those of other enlightenment traditions. Paramahansaji used to say, "I honor the saints of all religions while being true to the kriya yoga path." When a teacher of a another yoga or metaphysical tradition was mentioned in his presence, my guru would say, "He (or she) is doing good work." He also sometimes initiated spiritual teachers who were not his disciples and maintained a close friendship with them through the years. Joel Goldsmith told me (in 1956) that Paramahansaji initiated him many years before and that he derived benefit from his practice of kriya yoga meditation techniques.

I have initiated several Religious Science, Unity, and other ministers who privately practice kriya meditation methods.

Have you known any individuals who were (or are) fully Self- and God-realized as a result of their practice of kriya yoga?

I know of only a few whom Paramahansaji said were Self- and God-realized, or would be in their present incarnation. I cannot determine the state of consciousness of others unless I have an opportunity to closely observe them. I do know that many kriya devotees make the mistake of being satisfied with having a sense of God-communion rather than aspiring to be fully spiritually enlightened. Some of them are complacent because they feel resigned to "God's will" for them. A person who believes that their Self-realization is determined by an external cause will be inclined to hope and wait rather than do what is necessary to purify the mind, refine the body, and clarify their awareness.

Some devotees who feel that their role is to be a servant of God are influenced by sentiment and not by reason or their innate urge to be fully awake. They mistakenly think that they cannot be fully awake or are reluctant to experience a radical adjustment of viewpoint that would allow them to be Self- and God-realized.

> A man whose body was made of salt stood at the shore of an ocean. Wondering how deep the ocean was, he walked into it until the water was up to his waist. Noticing that his body was dissolving, and beginning to merge with the water, he quickly returned to the safety of dry land and exclaimed, "I don't want to become the ocean, I just want to know about it!"

Many devotees are like this; they want to know about God while remaining as they are. I have known many kriya yogis who, although they were able to meditate deeply and were usually kind and compassionate, had not yet overcome or transcended the characteristics that are common when one is in ordinary awareness.

How concerned should I be about my karma in relationship to my potential to be Self-realized?

Three categories of karma (subconscious and unconscious conditionings) prevail until the mind is purified. 1) influences that are now evident; 2) influences that may be activated at any time; 3) latent impressions that may be influential in the future.

1. Constructive influences can be allowed to prevail if their results enhance our lives. Troublesome influences should be resisted and overcome by positive thinking and actions.
2. Influences that are easily activated can be restrained and neutralized by intentional, constructive thinking and actions, and by cultivating mental and emotional peace.
3. The potency of latent impressions is most easily dissolved by cultivating superconscious states which purify all levels of the mind and body.

When the first two categories of karmic impressions are neutralized and Self- and God-realization are constant, we are "free while embodied." When latent karmic impressions are neutralized, our consciousness is completely liberated.

Do we really have free will? Or are our experiences, including our spiritual awakenings, predestined?

If we did not have free will we would be unable to choose our thoughts, actions, and circumstances. We have free will in regard to how we choose live. We are predestined to awaken through the stages of spiritual growth until we are Self- and God-realized. Although we may consciously or unconsciously resist the fulfillment of our destiny, we cannot avoid the final outcome. The awareness of all souls that are involved with mundane conditions will eventually be restored to its original purity. Spiritual growth (awakening) is slow, moderate, fast, or extremely rapid as determined by our aspiration, endeavor, and capacity to be awake to the truth of what we are.

How can I know if I am destined to represent our kriya yoga tradition as a guru and initiator?

When you calmly ask the question, what is the response from your heart (the core essence of your being)? At this level, you know if you are "called" to serve as a teacher-representative of this kriya yoga tradition. Being aware of this sense of mission is more important that "wanting" to teach. If you are certain that you are "destined" to represent this work, do all that you can to prepare yourself to do it. Acquire the knowledge that is needed and nurture your divine qualities. Attune your mind and being to God and the gurus of our tradition. If you have a guru in our tradition, he or she will guide you and ordain you when you are prepared to teach and initiate. If I am your guru, I will guide you, and ordain you when you are prepared.

In our current era, there is a great need for many trained teachers and kriya initiators who are qualified to assist sincere truth seekers. There is also a need for more truth seekers to be sincere and intentional in their practices.

Florida, Arizona & California
Meditation Seminars with Roy Eugene Davis

Techniques and Routines For All Levels of Practice

Donation Basis. Reservations requested unless otherwise noted.
Kriya yoga initiation at these locations.

Tallahassee, Florida: Friday, February 6, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Radisson Hotel, 415 North Monroe Street

***Orlando, Florida**: Sunday, February 8, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
LaQuinta Inn • 626 Lee Road. I-4 to Lee Road Exit 88

Naples, Florida: Sunday, February 15, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Unity of Naples • 2000 Unity Way

***Phoenix, Arizona**: Sunday, March 14, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Holiday Inn • 4321 North Central Avenue

Peoria, Arizona: Wednesday, March 17, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
For Center for Spiritual Unfoldment (Reservations not required)
The Masonic Fellowship Center, 18810 North 107 Avenue
For travel directions: 623-975-1559 e-mail: jbenson32@cox.net

San Diego (MIRA MESA), Calif.: Sat., March 20, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Holiday Inn • 9335 Kearny Mesa Road
From I-15, exit Miramar Road. From I-805, exit La Jolla Village Drive/ Miramar Road, go east to Kearny Mesa Road.

***Costa Mesa, California**: Sunday, March 21, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Holiday Inn • 3131 South Bristol Street. 1 mile west of Orange County Airport. South on Bristol Street off Hwy 405, two blocks.

Sacramento, California: Tuesday, March 23, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
East West Books • 2216 Fair Oaks Blvd. (at Howe Avenue)
Limited to 110 participants / $8.00
Reservations: Telephone 916-920-3837 email: ewb@eastwestbooks.com

– continued on following page

*__San Jose, California__: Saturday, March 27, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Center for Spiritual Enlightenment • 1146 University Ave.
Tel: (408) 283-0221 e-mail: info@CSEcenter.org

For Orlando, Phoenix, San Diego & Costa Mesa reservations:

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Request seminar brochures for distribution in your community. Give them to others who are spiritually inclined. Put them in bookstores, natural food stores, yoga centers, New Thought churches and centers—wherever they may be seen by people who might be interested. let us know the quantity to send. Posters are also available.

There is a fundamental purpose for our lives. To recognize it we must understand where life comes from and where it is going. We must look beyond our immediate goals to what we ultimately want to accomplish and consider life's highest potential for development.

To be God-realized is to know your Self as the great ocean of Spirit by dissolving the delusion [mistaken idea] that you are this little ego, personality, and body.

Self-realization is knowing in all parts of your body, mind, and being that you are wholly established in God. To be Self-realized, you only have to improve your knowing.

In the highest state of consciousness you [can] maintain your divine realizations while working, speaking, and moving about in this world. When that is accomplished, there is no possibility of falling back into delusion [unknowing].

– *Paramahansa Yogananda*

Private Retreats At CSA Headquarters
For CSA Members and Kriya Initiates

Spring Schedule

May 3 – 7 May 10 – 14 May 17 – 21

Autumn Schedule

September 6 – 10 September 13 – 17 September 20 – 24

Limited to 20 participants.
Stay for one, two, or three weeks.

Arrive Saturday or Sunday.
Private, Comfortable Guest House Rooms Provided
Prepare Your Own Vegetarian Meals

- One Hour Meditation at 6 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- Class on kriya yoga philosophy and practices at 7 a.m.
- Two hours of light work-service daily.
- Free time for rest, private study, and quiet reflection.
- Donation basis.
- Reservations required.
- Request travel directions if needed.

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Regular summer retreat schedules open to everyone are published in *Truth Journal* and our newsletter.

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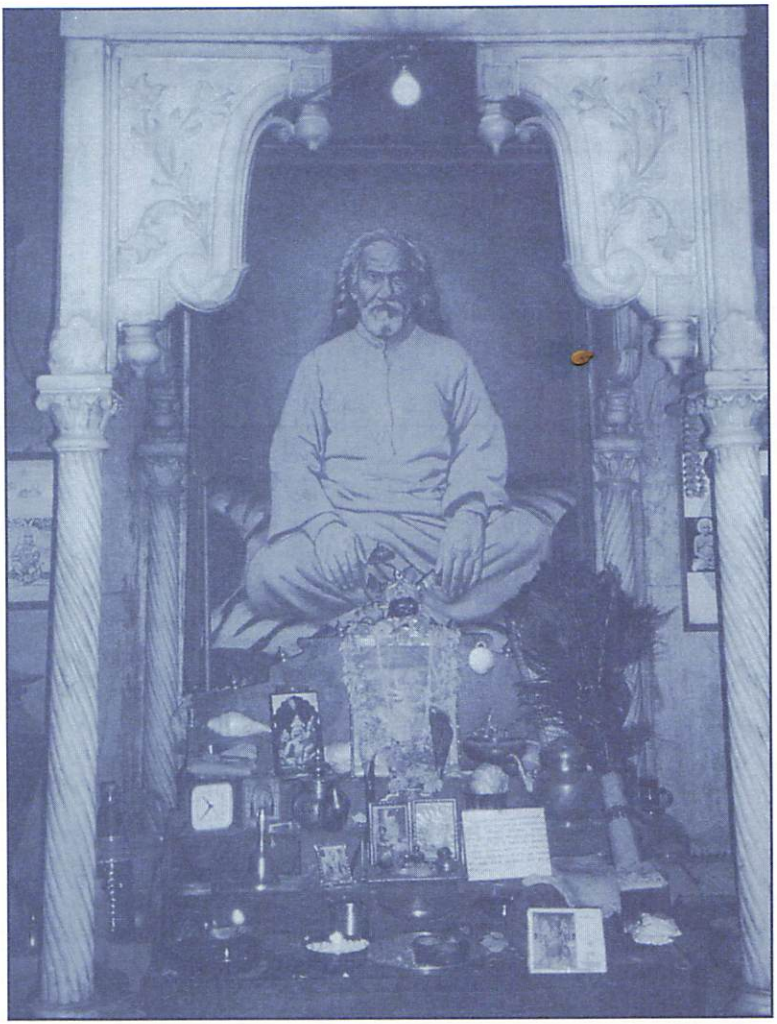
A Quarterly Forum for Kriya Yoga Initiates

April – June 2004



By the practice of the disciplines of yoga [samadhi], restricting influences are weakened and clarification of awareness to the stage of discriminative discernment [spiritual enlightenment] is accomplished.

– Patanjali's yoga-sutras

Listen carefully, how by practicing yoga with awareness merged in the reality of God, you shall completely apprehend and experience God as God is. This is definitely true. *– Bhagavad Gita 7:1*

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Front cover photo: Oil painting of Swami Sri Yukteswar at a private kriya yoga meditation center in Pune, India.

Written by Roy Eugene Davis

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Is Your Kriya Yoga Practice Complete?

Kriyas are "actions" that are intentionally performed for total well-being. Your practice of kriya yoga is complete only when the spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, and environmental components of your life are harmoniously integrated. Keep this fact in the forefront of your mind and do your best to be a dedicated kriya yoga practitioner.

Is your understanding of the kriya yoga path comprehensive?

comprehensive Broad in scope, based on understanding.

The two basic kriya yoga texts are Patanjali's yoga-sutras and the Bhagavad Gita. Read them frequently. An intellectual grasp of the teachings will eventually be replaced by direct, intuitive insight and your understanding of this path will then be comprehensive. A useful way to read these books is to first read the complete text, then daily read a few verses. A good time to do this is just after meditation practice when your mind is calm and you are more receptive to learning.

Paramahansa Yogananda recommended that we endeavor to assume the viewpoint of the person who wrote the texts to access that person's state of consciousness and the knowledge they had when they wrote it.

Do You Understand What It Means to Be An Initiate of this Kriya Yoga Tradition?

When you were initiated, you were given general lifestyle guidelines and specific instruction in the practice of meditation techniques. Initiation should be viewed as an occasion during which ordinary, conditioned mental attitudes and behaviors are

freely renounced and constructive mental attitudes and behaviors are chosen. This is why initiation is a new beginning, a departure from past nonuseful behaviors that makes possible entry into a new, higher way of living.

An initiate should have profound respect for the tradition and the teachers of the tradition, as well as self-respect. Self-respect, which is natural when we know that we are divine beings, inspires us to do whatever is necessary to enable us to experience rapid unfoldment of our innate potential.

When the initiate is knowledgeably intentional in thought and action, spiritual growth occurs quickly. When attention is not concentrated, awareness is fragmented and thoughts and actions are erratic. Mastery of attention is the key to success in mundane endeavors and in spiritual practice endeavors.

A practical way to acquire mastery of attention is to cultivate the habit of speaking and acting with conscious intention. Until your words and actions are always spontaneously appropriate to existing circumstances, think before you speak or act. Never say anything about yourself that indicates weakness or indecisiveness. Avoid performing meaningless actions.

Do You Really Practice Yoga?

samadhi The primary definition of *yoga*. From Sanskrit *sam*, to bring together. When wavelike movements (vrittis) that ordinarily occur in the mind and awareness cease, attention is spontaneously focused, awareness is clear, and a vivid sense of oneness is experienced.

Regular practice of samadhi is real yoga practice. If you are practicing meditation techniques and other procedures but are not yet experiencing samadhi, you are engaged in but the outer forms of practice.

The first five stages of practice described in chapter two of the yoga-sutras (avoidance of harmful mental attitudes and behaviors; disciplined living; meditation posture; pranayama prac-

tice; and internalization of attention are procedures that should enable you to progress to concentration, unwavering meditation, and samadhi.

Two kinds of samadhi can be experienced: 1) absorption of attention in that which was contemplated (light, inner sound, an awareness of bliss or pure joy); 2) transcendental samadhi during which there is no awareness of being identified with anything. The second samadhi is referred to as "isolation" because awareness is removed from external influences.

Many devotees who are satisfied with the first kind of samadhi experience do not aspire to go beyond it and thus slow or block their spiritual awakening. What is not generally known is that transcendental samadhi can be experienced without experiencing the first kind of samadhi.

Samadhi cannot be understood by attempts to use mental concepts to compare it with ordinary states of awareness. It is not a mental or emotional state or condition; it is realization of pure existence-being unrelated to anything.

While samadhi may be experienced when we meditate, it may be experienced at any time by withdrawing attention from mental and emotional states. When samadhi (realization of oneness) is constant when we are thinking and acting, we can observe thoughts, actions, and external conditions without having our awareness modified by them.

Helpful training to prepare for samadhi experience is to practice discerning the difference between your Self as the one who perceives and what is observed.

How an object [a thought, feeling, thing, or circumstance] is perceived is determined by the [powers of] perception of the observer.

– Patanjali's yoga-sutras 4:15

Your questions, inquiries and comments are requested for possible inclusion in our ongoing dialogue. Use the enclosed response form, fax 706-782-4560 or e-mail csainc@csa-davis.org

I have been told that I have a condition described as attention deficit disorder. What can I do to overcome it?

This diagnosis has recently become quite common. Some people have impaired powers of concentration, which need to be improved. Others, many of whom who are only mildly dysfunctional, use their acquired habit of being inattentive as an excuse for intellectual laziness, reluctance to use their will power to perform better, or lack of meaningful purpose.

Attention deficit disorder (ADD), now usually referred to as attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD), is characterized by inability to concentrate, mental confusion, and sometimes erratic behavior. It is thought that one of its causes may be faulty regulation of dopamine, a brain neurotransmitter that regulates movement and emotional response.

It is of interest to note (in an article in the November 10, 2003 issue of *Forbes* magazine) that many people who have this disorder can concentrate well and stay focused for many hours when they are engaged in a project in which they are keenly interested. Perhaps being interested in accomplishing goals that are considered to be of value is one way to overcome the problem. An Ayurvedic practitioner might consider the condition to be related to a vata imbalance and treat the patient accordingly.

Some helpful things to do:

- Maintain, a regular schedule of rest and useful activity.
- Choose to accomplish meaningful goals and to complete personal projects in a well-planned, orderly manner.

- Cultivate optimism and cheerfulness.
- Avoid impulsive behaviors.
- Choose a wholesome diet. Avoid excessive use of sugar, soft drinks, and stimulants.
- Control your emotional responses to everyday situations that are encountered. Train yourself to be calm, patient, and intentional in behaviors and conversations.
- Don't talk about "your" problem, say that you "have it," or associate too much with others who say they have it.
- Meditate once or twice a day for at least twenty minutes to experience physical relaxation and mental peace and to improve your powers of concentration.
- Biofeedback training can also be helpful.

Doing these things will contribute to normal brain function as well as help you to be more soul-centered.

Why do some kriya yoga practitioners who seem peaceful and devotional still have erroneous beliefs?

They don't use their intellectual powers to discern what is true and they may not be sophisticated (well-informed).

I know kriya yoga practitioners who believe in Satan as a personification of evil, say that Paramahansa Yogananda was a reincarnation of Jesus, and assert that it isn't possible for anyone to be Self- and God-realized in one incarnation. Some of them are confused because of trying to adapt philosophical concepts on which authentic spiritual enlightenment practices are based to false traditional religious beliefs acquired when they were children or young adults. They habitually associate with others who think as they do and seem to be satisfied with their condition of shared ignorance.

One reason for their lack of understanding is that, when they meditate, they are inclined to be satisfied with having only a sense of peace or blissfulness which they mistakenly presume to

be evidence of communion with God rather than aspire to experience and perfect superconscious states. If they regularly experienced superconsciousness, their knowledge of the facts of life would be flawless.

I recently talked with a friend who used to meditate and now seems disinterested. When I tried to encourage him to resume meditation practice, he wasn't responsive. Why do some people who were enthusiastic about spiritual matters revert to former ways of thinking or become apathetic?

Some yogis say that it is because their constructive karma (positive subconscious tendencies) was not strong enough to sustain them or they allowed tamasic influences to prevail. Or perhaps they were not highly motivated, didn't aspire to Self-realization as their ultimate aim in life, were inclined to be easily distracted, or allowed their emotions to dominate their reason. A person who aspires to be spiritually awake will not allow karma, or any other condition, to divert them from their course of constructive action.

What can I do to stay focused on my spiritual practices?

Adhere to good health habits, read inspirational literature, pray and meditate daily, and skillfully perform your duties as one of God's agents in this world. Everything you do will then be spiritual practice that will purify your mind and allow your innate, divine qualities and powers to be actualized.

It is difficult for me to understand what God is. When I think I have insights, they soon fade away. My concepts about God are constantly changing and are often mixed with beliefs that I thought I had dismissed. Can God actually be known and experienced? When, or if, I do know and experience the reality of God, how will it affect me and my circumstances?

Acquire an intellectual understanding of God as:

- The field of absolute (pure) existence.
- The Cosmic Soul aspect with attributes.
- Om, that produces the field of primordial nature from which cosmic forces emanate that manifest and sustain the universe.
- All individualized units of pure consciousness.

Train yourself to remember what is true about the reality of God. Be aware that God, being omnipresent, is always where you are and the material things you see and use are formed of cosmic forces that emanate from God.

When you know and experience God as God is, you will be peaceful, confident, secure, and purposeful. Concepts about God will be replaced with accurate knowledge that emerges from within your being.

I am retired, financially secure, and in good health. I maintain a regular program of study and meditation and my personal relationships are comfortable, yet I feel that something is missing from my life.

What may be missing is a more obvious awareness of your real nature in relationship with God. Also, it will be helpful to think about what you can do that will enable you to use the skills and resources that you have in ways that benefit others and/or enable you to feel that your life is worthwhile. Since you know that you will live forever, in this world or in some other realm, decide the best way to live your immortal life.

After being initiated into kriya yoga practices, is it useful to be initiated again?

Attending more initiation services can be useful because the information will be helpful, you will have an opportunity to

review your meditation practices, and it will be an ideal time to renew your commitment to the spiritual path.

I was first initiated by my guru in August, 1950, after which he helped me see the light in the spiritual eye. I was also present at Paramahansaji's last public initiation service in 1951 and at initiations conducted by James Lynn (Rajarsi Janankananda), in 1952 and 1953. At all of the sessions that I attended after being initiated by my guru, I learned something new and derived benefit from being with other devotees of God.

At the conclusion of the initiation service conducted by Mr. Lynn in 1953, he raised both hands, and quietly said, "Receive Master's blessing. Receive it. Receive it." Everyone who was receptive could actually feel, as I did, the magnetic waves from his hands that swept through the room.

The special quality of spiritual force that is present at the time of kriya yoga initiation is transformative. Once, when I visited Paramahansaji at his desert retreat house in Twenty Nine Palms, California, he said to me, "Whenever you give kriya initiation, I, or one of the Great Ones (gurus), will be there." He was referring to the stream of grace that flows from God through the lineage of gurus.

While I am conscious of my role as a representative of the gurus of our kriya yoga tradition, some of the people whom I initiate are not aware of it. They do not see beyond my personality to That which provides the flow of power and redemptive grace of Consciousness.

Should I increase the number of kriya pranayamas every few months or is it better to continue with a few repetitions but do them with more concentration?

Increase the number of pranayamas when you feel that it may be useful to do so. There is no need to adhere to a fixed number. It is better strive for depth of practice than to think that many repetitions will be more beneficial. Experiment to dis-

cover what produces the most satisfying results.

Some kriya initiates say that doing 12 to 20 pranayamas and sitting in the silence is most useful for them. Others say that doing 30, 50, or 100 repetitions before experiencing the tranquil silence works best for them. Do them with intention, not too fast, and without forcing the procedure.

Avoid too much concern about mechanical performance of techniques. Use them, then go beyond them.

When I first began to meditate, I seemed to progress rapidly and often had interesting experiences and insights. Now, it seems that meditation requires more effort and I seldom have interesting experiences or useful insights.

When we first begin to practice we may be more attentive and responsive to what is occurring. Later, when we settle down and become aware that psychological transformation is usually a gradual process and that spiritual enlightenment isn't going to occur immediately, we may become somewhat lazy. The most worthwhile meditative perceptions are those which provide peace of mind and an improved understanding of our true nature and God. Transitory subjective experiences and perceptions are of little value.

During the past several months I have become overly involved with personal concerns and the problems and needs of others and have neglected my studies and meditation practice. What is a good way get back on the right track?

Immediately resume your studies and meditation practices with firm resolve. Establish your priorities. See to your own well-being first, then compassionately help others, when you can, without allowing sentiment to cloud your reason or cause you to dissipate your energies and resources. Care about the welfare of others without feeling sorry for them or assuming their mental states or states of consciousness.

I enjoy praying to saints and the gurus of our tradition. Now and then I wonder if the satisfying results that I sometimes experience are because of their response or are the results of my own prayer practice and personal expectations.

When you pray to a saint, your concept of that person can be a point of contact with a larger reality. The beneficial response is due to either 1) your own expectation or 2) the flow of grace from the Source.

What can I do to become more cosmic conscious?

Clarify and expand your consciousness. Aspire to perceive all that can be perceived and all that can be known. As your capacity to perceive and to know increases, cosmic conscious states will be experienced. Although a person who is thirsty may want to drink a large quantity of water, the amount that one can actually drink is determined by the size of the stomach. Likewise, when we aspire to be cosmic conscious, we can only be aware in accord with our capacity to apprehend.

When meditating in the silence, expand your awareness. Visualize yourself as a unit of pure consciousness in infinite space. At other times, remember that you abide in the ocean of Consciousness and that everything in, and beyond, the material universe exists in that Ocean. It can also be helpful to be aware at the crown chakra and to feel that you are not confined to your mind or body.

Read Paramahansa Yogananda's poem, *Samadhi,* in which he described a cosmic conscious experience (pages 65 and 66 in my book *A Guide to Kriya Yoga Practice*).

Can a spiritually enlightened person use intention or will power to elevate our consciousness or do we have to do it for ourselves?

We can be assisted to the degree that we are receptive to their work on our behalf. While being thankful for their good

will and help, we must also help ourselves and not have an infantile attitude of dependency.

I have known devotional brother and sister disciples who were so emotionally immature that when they experienced good fortune they attributed it to our guru's intervention, and when they had challenges they believed that our guru was testing them to make them strong. It seldom occurred to them that their own states of mind and consciousness, and personal actions, caused or allowed the conditions they experienced. It is useful to have devotion and to be receptive to grace; it is not spiritually beneficial to erroneously believe that all personal circumstances are caused by external influences.

Some spiritually inclined people think that whatever they experience must be God's will. In times of good fortune, they are thankful for their blessings. When they have difficulties, they pray for strength to endure them until their burdens are lifted by grace, rather than examine their states of mind and consciousness, and behaviors, and change what can be changed by an act of conscious volition or will.

The greatest gifts that we can receive from a spiritually enlightened person are their wisdom, silent transmission of spiritual force, and selfless willingness to share with us their God-conscious realization.

When I practice kriya pranayama, while it calms my mind and improves my concentration, I do not feel an obvious surge of energy in my spine. What can I do to feel the energy moving?

Be aware of your spine. With the fingertips of your right hand, reach back and touch the base of your spine, then your spiritual eye center. This will help you to be aware of where the current will flow.

Drop the root of your tongue back and down into the throat, create a suction effect in your throat as you inhale and feel the energy being pulled up from the base of the spine, through the

chakras. With practice you will feel a surge of energy and be able to pull it all the way up into the spiritual eye. Pause for a moment, then let the current of energy flow back through the brain and down through the chakras to the base of the spine. After practicing as many repetitions as you prefer to do, pull the current up, leave it at the spiritual eye, disregard the breath, and sit for a while in the silence with your attention and awareness stabilized in the spiritual eye and crown chakra (higher brain).

Moderate practice of an easy hatha yoga routine, focusing on the postures that stretch the spine, can be useful. Practice of mahamudra and uddiyana bandha (the stomach lift) before doing kriya pranayama encourages the awakening of energies in the lower chakras. Mental and emotional calmness, fervent aspiration to be Self- and God-realized, and devotional ardor arouses dormant kundalini energies.

Chiropractic adjustments can also be helpful.

When obvious surges of energy are not felt in the spine, if pranayama results in mental peace and clarity of awareness, it is helpful. The aim when meditating is to be superconscious.

Review the first chapter of Patanjali's yoga-sutras in *The Path of Light* or *A Guide to Kriya Yoga Practice*. Also read the other four chapters.

After a few years of metaphysical study and regular meditation practice, I don't seem to be making progress. I am still restless, have emotional ups and downs, and have some physical and financial problems.

When engaged in metaphysical study, use your powers of intellectual and intuitive discernment to comprehend what is being examined. When you meditate, persist until you abide in a calm, clear state of awareness.

Meditation, when correctly practiced, greatly contributes to our total well-being. When we are not meditating we have to be responsible for our mental states and actions, and do for our-

selves what can be done.

Apply what you learn from your studies to overcome your problems. Be practical and realistic. Remember that you are a spiritual being—assume that state of Self-awareness and the mental attitude and outlook on life that corresponds to it.

Evident indications of how well we are progressing on the spiritual path are rational thinking, emotional stability, and the ability to function effectively. Take charge of your life and go forward with enthusiasm and confidence.

Psychological transformation results when we discipline our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. In the first verse of chapter two in the yoga-sutras austerity (self-discipline) is the first word used to define kriya yoga practice that removes all mental and physical obstacles to Self-realization.

A well-disciplined life enables us to meditate effectively and to accomplish all of our useful day-to-day purposes. Many people erroneously think that when they learn kriya yoga meditation practices their spiritual growth will be faster. They do not yet know that kriya practice includes self-discipline and right endeavor to rise above the illusional sense of self.

I have addictive tendencies. Should I try to overcome them by myself or could it be helpful to attend support-group meetings with others who have similar tendencies?

If you really need the support of others, obtain it until you no longer need it. Avoid allowing the support of others to be an addiction. When you are highly motivated to actualize your innate potential, addictive tendencies will be neutralized.

Private Retreats At CSA Headquarters
For CSA Members and Kriya Initiates

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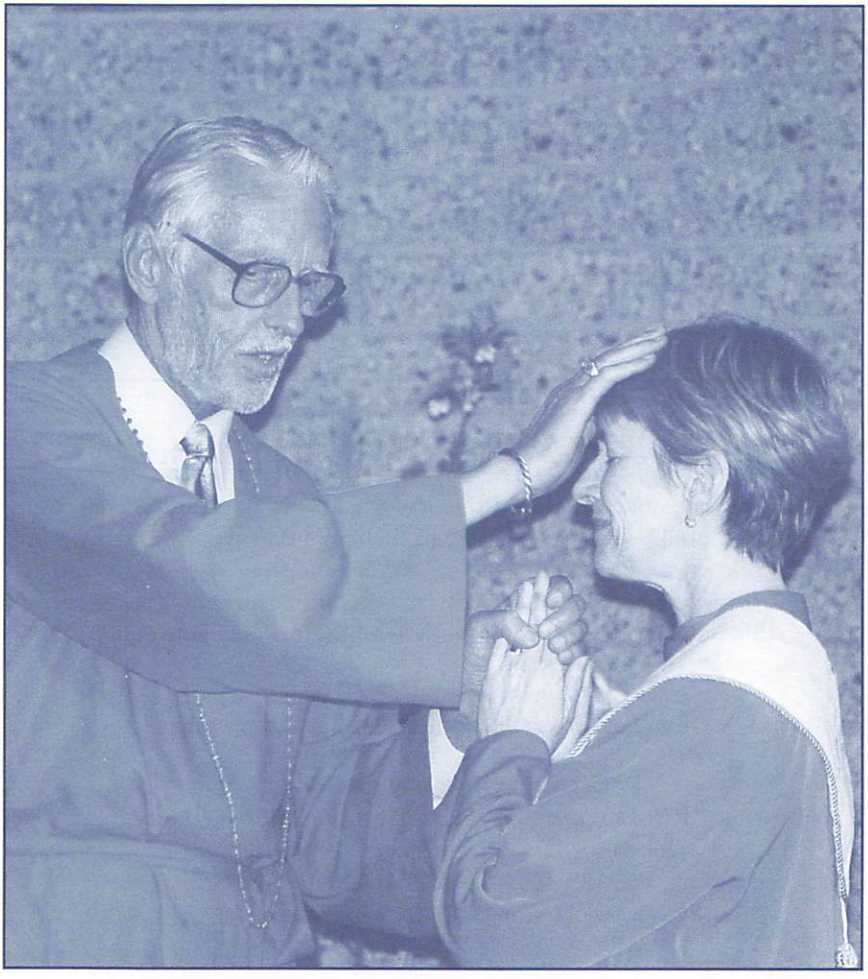
Regular summer retreat schedules open to everyone are published in *Truth Journal* and our newsletter.

RADIANCE

A Quarterly Forum for Kriya Yoga Initiates

July – September 2004



You are on earth for but a little while, and your real reason for being here is much different from what you may have imagined. If you want God's guidance in your life, don't waste time in idle talk.

– Paramahansa Yogananda

When [regularly] rested by pranayama practice, the nervous system is refreshed and the physical body is vitalized. *– Swami Sri Yukteswar*

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The Positive Results of Right Spiritual Practice

This same ancient [knowledge of] yoga is now declared by me to you, for you are my disciple and friend. – *Bhagavad Gita 4:3*

The philosophical concepts, practices, and spiritual force that I share are transmitted through a lineage of gurus who experienced the positive results of their own studies and meditative realizations. You can experience positive results by comprehending the facts of life; holistic living; and attentive, superconscious meditation practice.

When I met Paramahansa Yogananda, in 1949, I instantly knew that he was God-realized and could help me to awaken to Self- and God-realization. During the next two years, as I engaged in study and spiritual practice, my guru instructed and encouraged me. In late 1951, he ordained and empowered me to represent this kriya yoga tradition.

Philosophical concepts and information about spiritual practices can be obtained from a variety of sources; what is most important and helpful to us is the silent transmission of spiritual force that is received when we are receptive to it.

Mental, moral, and spiritual strength is acquired by contemplating friendliness, compassion, and other noble qualities.
– *Patanjali's yoga-sutras 3:24*

We can be receptive to the transmission of spiritual force that flows through the lineage of gurus by cultivating our mental, moral, and spiritual powers and all of the other noble qualities that we aspire to actualize. This can most easily be done by accepting them as being natural for us to have. In your mind's eye, and at the core of your being, *see* and *feel* yourself as you aspire to be. *See* and *feel* yourself to be mentally competent, wisely purposeful and effective in your actions, and spiritually awake.

Transcend ordinary modes of thinking, feeling, and behaviors and states of awareness. As a dedicated practitioner of kriya yoga, resist and rise above all conditions that are incompatible with your highest ideals. If your thoughts, feelings, and actions are conformed to ordinary human circumstances, you will continue to experience them. If you sincerely want to rise above and be free from ordinary human circumstances, you can do so by choice and intention.

People who do not aspire to be spiritually awake usually allow themselves to be overly influenced by subconscious inclinations, habits, and traditional ideas. They prefer to be normal like others they know or with whom they associate. If you sincerely want to be spiritually enlightened, don't be normal; be exceptional. There is no need to overtly dramatize your spiritual aspirations. Be outwardly appropriate in your relationships while inwardly soul- and God-centered.

When the waves [vrittis] in awareness are transcended by meditation practice, consciousness is purified and the Self is realized.

– *Lahiri Mahasaya*

Lahiri Mahasaya referred to Patanjali's yoga-sutra (1:2). The restless movements in awareness keep our attention involved with thoughts, emotions, and external conditions. When they are calmed and pacified by meditation practice, the reality of the soul is spontaneously revealed.

When you are not meditating, fluctuations in awareness can be calmed by maintaining an attitude of unemotional objectivity. Observe mental states and states of awareness with detachment and they will no longer obscure perception of your true nature.

Transcend mental states and ordinary states of awareness by meditating to the stage of superconsciousness.

Send questions and inquiries for possible future use in our ongoing discussions. Mail, fax 706-782-4560, or e-mail csainc@davis.org

When practicing kriya pranayama should my attention be at the spiritual eye or in the spine?

Look into the spiritual eye and *feel* the current as it flows in the spinal pathway. Pull it up to the spiritual eye as you inhale; let it flow down as you exhale. To conclude, pull the current into the spiritual eye and leave it there. Disregard your breath. Sit in the peaceful silence with your awareness in the spiritual eye and higher brain.

As the current of life forces moves through the spine, try to feel it moving deep inside the spine.

Should kriya pranayama be practiced by breathing through the mouth or through the nose?

New initiates are usually advised to breath through the mouth in order to more obviously feel a cool sensation in the throat which can be related to the spine to aid in feeling a surge of current moving upward when inhaling. After a few weeks, or months, when the current can be felt in the spine when breathing through the nose, do it that way. The key to effective practice is to create a suction effect in the throat when inhaling that enables you to feel the current in the spine move upward.

Nothing exceptional happens when I practice kriya pranayama and meditate. I do not see lights or have ecstatic feelings.

The purpose of kriya pranayama practice is to elicit physical relaxation and calm the mind so that clear awareness results. There is no need to see inner light or experience ecstasy. If a

light is observed, use it to focus attention. If a joyous feeling is experienced, let it stabilize your awareness while aspiring to experience a state of pure consciousness. The purpose of meditation practice should be Self-realization.

How can I more easily merge my awareness with Om?

With your awareness at the crown chakra, listen to the sound and blend with it. No effort is needed. If thoughts persist, think of God as the source of Om.

How long should I sit after kriya practice and jyoti mudra?

After practicing each technique, sit as long as a calm, clear state of awareness prevails. Practice of a meditation technique is preparation for resting in the tranquil state and for meditative contemplation on that which you aspire to experience or know. To contemplate that which you aspire to experience, ponder it and endeavor to assume it. To contemplate in order to have knowledge of something, look at it with expectation of discovery until insight emerges in your awareness.

Describe how to do the root lock when doing maha mudra or the method that is done before kriya pranayama practice.

Sit upright, gently contract the anal sphincter, lift the rib cage and pull the current up the spine with inhalation. Doing this will somewhat awaken energies in the lower chakras.

Can you provide more information about how to practice kriya pranayama effectively?

When pulling the current upward, lift the rib cage slightly when inhaling. If you have been practicing kriya pranayama for several months and are not as concentrated as you would like to be, when pulling the current up and letting it go down, mentally chant Om at each chakra. If this is too distracting, don't do it.

Although I practice meditation daily, I am often mentally and emotionally disturbed by troublesome events that occur and blame myself for what happens.

Learn to live effectively. If troublesome events are caused by others, communicate with them clearly and make wiser choices. Discover what causes the events in your life to occur. When you have good fortune, be thankful. When misfortune occurs, remain calm while correcting the situation if it is possible to do so. If the event is past and nothing can be done about it, release it. Avoid feelings of guilt or remorse. Think rationally as you go forward with confidence.

Why is it that most teachers of enlightenment traditions do not discuss their struggles and weaknesses. It is difficult for me to relate to someone who has had no difficulties. I don't have much confidence in someone like that. It seems to me that if they don't admit their human problems that they are in a state of denial. Did you have doubts? Did you struggle to overcome personal difficulties?

They tend to emphasize their realizations, and what we can also realize rather than focus on overcoming conditions that are related to ordinary states of awareness. Because they have overcome their former limitations, they are not inclined to refer to them. Some enlightened teachers have told of their endeavors for the benefit of truth seekers.

Although I have never had any doubts about the reality of God or the possibility of being God-realized, I had to learn to overcome personal limitations and various challenges. Until we are fully spiritually enlightened, the need to learn and to grow is ever present. My major challenges were not in regard to relating to God. I had to learn how to live effectively and to represent the kriya tradition in the most useful ways.

Explain more fully the relationships between God and love, and between love and God's grace.

People who imagine God as a cosmic person are inclined to think that God is other than them and to want God to love them and to care for them. When we know God as God is, and that we are units of that Reality, thoughts of difference do not arise. God's grace is the innate inclination of life to nurture and provide for all living things. We become more receptive to the actions of grace as we become increasingly aware of the wholeness of life and our oneness with God. To "love" God is to yearn to realize our oneness with God that already exists.

As you continue to awaken, your comprehension of God will replace your concepts of God.

How would our world be if everyone in it was enlightened?

If everyone was spiritually enlightened there would be no strife, war, crime, poverty, or hunger. Everyone in our world would be happy, healthy, prosperous, and engaged in useful endeavor for the highest good of all. This ideal condition is yet several thousand years in the future.

When we "graduate" from the need to reincarnate, what then will we do? I can't imagine not having some soul purpose even when we are free from this world.

We will do whatever we need, or are inspired, to do. Until we are fully liberated, our spiritual awakening can continue in the astral and causal realms. Our ultimate soul purpose is to be fully awake. This should be our aim while we are in this world and continue to accomplish our other useful purposes.

Re: Seven Lessons in Conscious Living, page 85, number 4, line 4. Shouldn't it read, "Relax and inhale"?

Yes. Thanks. This will be corrected in a future edition.

Can you recommend a good course in Sanskrit study? I want to be able to correctly pronounce the words.

An excellent audio recorded program is available from:

American Sanskrit Institute
6 Main Street
Chester, CT 06412
Tel: 1-800-459-4176
Fax: 860-525-9152
e-mail: sanskrit@sbcglobal.net

A variety of recordings are also available. One recording features Vyaas Houston (the founder of the Institute) chanting Patanjali's yoga-sutras in Sanskrit with English translation.

When Mr. Houston presented a Sanskrit learning seminar at CSA a few years ago, participants were able to chant, read, and write Sanskrit during one weekend. More time is needed to learn grammar and word meanings.

Knowing the meaning of a few key Sanskrit words can be helpful. Examples: *vritti*, "wavelike movements that occur in ordinary awareness." *Kriya*, "to do something with intention."

I was recently initiated. What should I do now?

Live your life constructively in accord with your highest ideals. Control your thoughts, emotions, urges, and actions. Study to improve your understanding of your true nature in relationship with God. Meditate superconsciously until you are permanently Self-realized and your consciousness is liberated from all erroneous ideas and illusions. Pray for the welfare and highest good of everyone.

The level of spiritual awareness to which I aspire seems to be far beyond my present state of consciousness. How can I get from where I am to where I want to be?

Continue to aspire to the ultimate degree of realization and have faith that it will be actualized. Avoid thinking of yourself as being confined or limited. You have the same capacity as any other soul to have your innate potential unveiled and expressed. Imagine yourself as you desire to be and assume and realize ever more clear states of consciousness.

Among the thousands of people who attended Paramahansa Yogananda's classes and the hundreds who were disciples, how many awakened to Self- and God-realization?

Not many. When teaching large classes in the 1920s and 30s he endeavored to inspire and motivate people to become more conscious of their relationship with God while knowing that only a small number of them would continue to practice. He said, "I am sowing spiritual seeds in the soil of their minds that may one day sprout, grow, and be of benefit to them."

Of disciples who had his ongoing personal guidance and encouragement, only a few had the capacity to understand what he taught and the will and ability to diligently use what he taught.

His endeavors were not wasted. Thousands of individuals were helped to a better way of life, hundreds were spiritually quickened, and many are still inspired by his life, books, and teachings which continue to be offered by representatives of his organization and some of his direct disciples. When asked why so many people's lives were transformed by reading his book, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, he said, "Because my spirit is in it."

Note: When I ask groups of seminar participants if they have read *Autobiography of a Yogi* there are always a few who have not yet read it—which surprises me because that book has been published since 1946 and is widely known. If you have not read it, do so. If you have read it, read it again from time to time.

Why do many people say we are in kali yuga, the era of confusion? Sri Yukteswar published his opinion that we are in an ascending era during which magnetism, electricity, and other forces of nature are being discovered and that people on the planet are becoming more conscious.

Sri Yukteswar's views are not widely known. Also, many people prefer to promote their traditional ideas because it is easier than trying to educate others.

Note: For an explanation of Sri Yukteswar's insights, refer to "yuga" in the glossary of *Seven Lessons in Conscious Living* or *A Guide to Kriya Yoga*.

In the chapter "The Science of Kriya Yoga" in Autobiography of a Yogi, *Paramahansaji wrote that kriya pranayama quickens one's spiritual evolution by refining the nervous system and brain, allowing consciousness to be more easily processed. If one performs hundreds of pranayamas each week, will spiritual enlightenment occur much sooner than it otherwise would?*

Mechanical practice of kriya pranayama will not produce the desired results. One must also be proficient in eliciting and maintaining superconscious states. Right, effective living and endeavor to discern what is true is also necessary.

Note: For information about superconscious states and liberation of consciousness, frequently read Patanjali's yoga-sutras in my books *The Path of Light* or *A Guide to Kriya Yoga Practice*.

For meditative contemplation, it can be useful to select one of Patanjali's sutras and persist until it is comprehended.

Example: "When samadhi without mental transformations is steady, the meditator's awareness reflects the light [truth, reality] of pure consciousness" (1:43).

Intentional contemplation of that which one aspires to know or to experience enables one to keep attention focused and avoid passive meditative states or preoccupation with subjective perceptions. To be useful, meditation must be an alert, conscious practice.

I am so preoccupied with my spiritual practices that I have little or no interest in ordinary activities or relationships and tend to be withdrawn and reclusive.

Occasions of retreat during which you can concentrate on your metaphysical studies and meditation practice is useful. So long as you have obligations and duties, however, it is best to balance your spiritual practices with responsible actions. Even when attending to necessary duties you can be Self- and God-aware. Unless you choose a monastic vocation, you will have to learn to be in the world while detached from it. Detachment does not mean avoidance of duties or aversion to performing them; it means doing what is necessary without ego-motivation and not being adversely affected by conditions you observe or to which you relate.

When I pray to a saint or to one of the gurus who is no longer in this world and my prayer is answered, does this mean that the person to whom I prayed actually responded?

All prayers go the Source regardless of to whom or what they are directed. Response to prayer comes from the Source or is the result of your adjustment of attitude, change in state of consciousness, or useful constructive actions. When you pray to a saint or one of the gurus, your faith establishes a point of contact with the Source.

I enjoy being with spiritually inclined friends, but feel ill at ease and awkward when with those who dramatize behaviors which are more common among persons raised in an Eastern culture, such as bowing in greeting or performing rituals with which I am not familiar.

It is good to respect the ideas and behaviors of others; you need not do anything that causes you discomfort or is insincere.

I meditate twice a day and practice kriya pranayama and jyoti mudra at both sessions. Could this routine be done more than twice a day?

During a retreat of several days or a week, you can do it three times a day: morning, noon, and early evening. If you do this, balance meditation practice with outer activity: walking or some other light physical exercise.

If you have few personal duties, your life is well-ordered, and you are mentally and emotionally stable, you can practice your routine three times a day on an ongoing schedule.

Why should one practice kriya yoga rather than Jnana, Raja, Karma, Hatha, or any other yogic system? What is so unique about kriya yoga?

Any intentional, constructive action is a kriya. Kriya yoga can include all yogic systems.

Did Paramahansa Yogananda recommend any special foods or lifestyle practices?

He recommended a natural, vegetarian diet and a lifestyle routine that would contribute to one's health and well-being. He sometimes advised individuals to include certain foods in their diet and to do other things that would be beneficial.

I'm going to devote a few days to physical rest, body cleansing, and meditative reflection. What is a simple, nourishing diet plan to use for this purpose?

During your renewal program, avoid strenuous physical activity, rest more than usual, and eat moderately. Maintain harmonious, mostly silent, environmental conditions.

Any light, natural, nourishing foods that appeal to you are all right. The following simple ayurvedic recipe may be used. It has a balance of vata, pitta, and kapha influences, is easy to

digest, and has a mild cleansing effect.

1 cup yellow split mung beans (at Indian grocery stores, a Whole Foods grocery store, or other food specialty stores). Wash, and soak the beans in water for two hours.
1 cup basmati rice (washed in water, until water runs clear)
1 inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled and chopped.
2 tbsp unsweetened shredded coconut
1 small handful cilantro leaves
1/2 cup water
3 tbsp ghee
1-1/2 inch of cinnamon stick
5 whole cardamom pods
5 whole cloves
10 black peppercorns
3 bay leaves
1/4 tsp turmeric & 1/4 tsp salt
6 cups water

In 1/2 cup of water, blend ginger, coconut, and cilantro.
In a pot on medium heat, put ghee, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, peppercorns, and bay leaves. Stir for a few moments until fragrant. Stir in the blended items, turmeric, and salt.

Add the rice and beans and stir to blend.

Add six cups of water and gently boil for five minutes. Turn the heat down to very low. Cover, with lid slightly ajar.

Cook 25 – 30 minutes, until the rice and beans are soft.

A leftover portion can be refrigerated 1 day and reheated.

News

More than 200 persons were initiated during my visits to Orlando, Phoenix, Costa Mesa, and San Jose in February and March. Many kriya initiates also attended for review. CSA members who worked at the book and free literature tables and helped in other ways at the seminars are appreciated, as are all who helped by distributing our publicity materials in their communities prior to the seminars.

There is a possibility that I will visit India in January 2005 to present meditation seminars and offer kriya yoga initiation in three or four major cities. Plans are being discussed with my publishers in Delhi. This will only be a short visit of perhaps two weeks. A group pilgrimage tour will not be included this time.

Plans are now in progress for a visit to London and Munich in the early part of April 2005. Italy may also be scheduled.

If you have kriya initiate friends who do not yet know about our work, give them a sample issue of *Radiance* magazine and let them know about A *Guide to Kriya Yoga Practice*. Encourage them to see our website: www.csa-davis.org

Participate in our ongoing dialogues in this magazine by sending your questions, inquiries, and comments.

Most important of all: Be attentive to your healthy lifestyle routines, metaphysical studies, and meditation practices. *Kriya* means *to do* what is essential to do for your total well-being.

Actions [kriyas] performed as duty without attachment to the results are spiritually elevating. – *Bhagavad Gita 18:9*

Private Retreats At CSA Headquarters
For CSA Members and Kriya Initiates

2004 Autumn Schedule

September 6 – 10 September 13 – 17 September 20 – 24

2005 Spring Schedule

May 2 – 6 May 9 – 13 May 16 – 20

Limited to 20 participants.
Stay for one, two, or three weeks.

Arrive Saturday or Sunday.
Private, Comfortable Guest House Rooms Provided
Prepare Your Own Vegetarian Meals

- One Hour Meditation at 6 a.m. and 2:45 p.m.
- Class on kriya yoga philosophy and practices at 7 a.m.
- Two hours of light work-service daily (optional).
- Free time for rest, private study, and quiet reflection.
- Donation basis.
- Reservations required.
- Request travel directions if needed.

Center for Spiritual Awareness
P.O. Box 7 Lakemont, GA 30552

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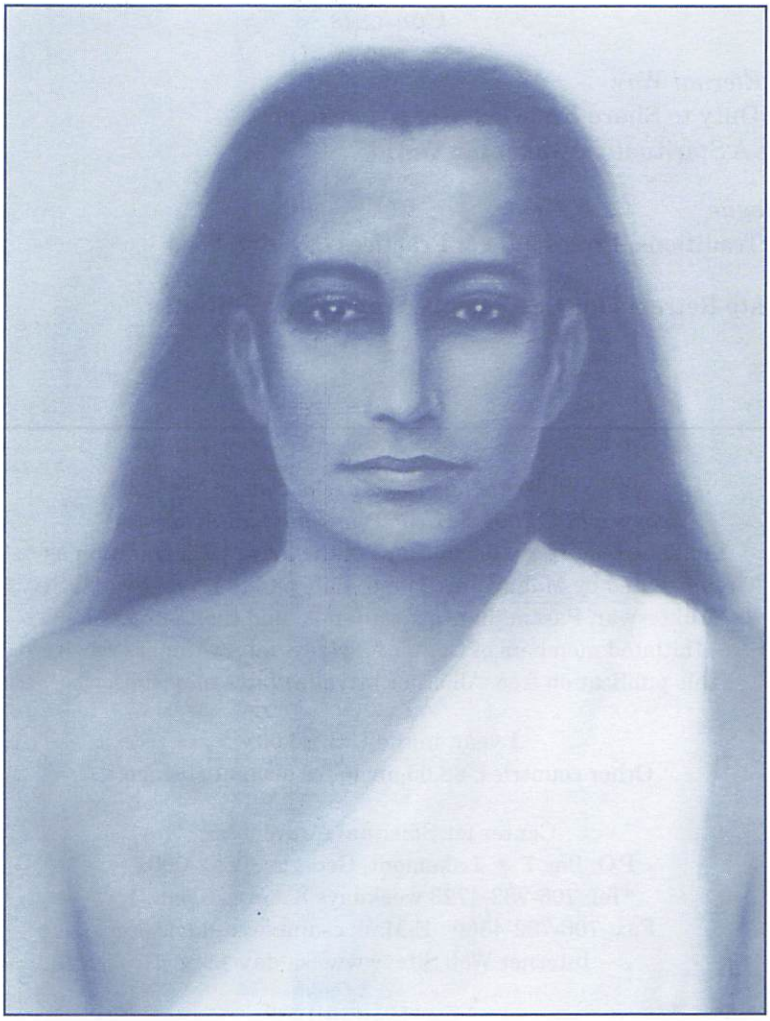
Internet web site www.csa-davis.org

Regular summer retreat schedules open to everyone are published in *Truth Journal* and our newsletter.

RADIANCE

A Quarterly Forum for Kriya Yoga Initiates

October – December 2004



Mahavatar Babaji

This is the royal, secret knowledge, the supreme way of purification in accord with righteousness, easy to practice, and eternal.

– Bhagavad Gita 9:2

When samadhi [realization of oneness] without mental transformations is stable, the meditator's awareness reflects the reality of pure consciousness. *– Patanjali's yoga-sutras 1:43*

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Written by Roy Eugene Davis
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Our Duty to Share Knowledge of Kriya Yoga With a Spiritually Awakening World

Since Paramahansa Yogananda began to teach in America, eighty-four years ago, many dramatic changes have occurred. Technological and scientific discoveries have influenced the lives of millions of people; the global population is more than four times larger than it was then; and sincere interest in spirituality is more evident in most regions of the world.

Among the increasing number of people whose interest in spiritual matters is sincere, many are still confused, uncertain about what to believe, lack knowledge of how to effectively live, and do not know how to experience spiritual growth that is authentic and satisfying. This is why it is our spiritual duty, to share knowledge of kriya yoga with others.

Only a few of Paramahansa Yogananda's disciples are still living. Some perform initiations, not as gurus, but as representatives of Self-Realization Fellowship. While these initiations are effective, the new initiates do not have the benefit of a guru-disciple relationship, ongoing instruction, and personal guidance.

As my guru's only remaining guru-successor, I have a strong sense of responsibility about reaching out to truth seekers who will be responsive to these teachings and will be able to derive benefit from kriya yoga practice. Having been fully dedicated to serving truth seekers for more than fifty years, I will continue to do this through my writings and at retreats and seminars. In the future, instead of traveling to several cities each year, regional seminars will be scheduled and more retreat programs will be offered here at Lakemont.

Now in my seventy-fourth year, I am increasingly aware of the need to have more help in our outreach and service endeavors. Your assistance in helping to make our mission more effective is cordially invited.

What you can do:

- Live a well-balanced, wholesome life and stay focused on your highest purpose for being in this world, which is to be fully Self-realized.
- Give my books and *Truth Journal* to others who you know to be spiritually inclined.
- Attend our seminars and retreats to improve your spiritual practices and for inner renewal.
- Volunteer your knowledge and skills to assist our ministry endeavors. Examples: Furio Sclano, a CSA member in Italy is having two of my books translated for a publisher there. Three members who live near CSA headquarters are helping with our video recording and editing. Let me know if you have knowledge and skills that you think would be helpful.
- Donate money. Our ministry is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit religious corporation, chartered in the State of Georgia in 1964.

If you have been donating on a regular schedule, or have made periodic, substantial donations, your participation has been helpful and is appreciated. If you have not donated on a regular schedule, now is an ideal time to begin. Your regular financial support of this ministry will provide a stronger sense of commitment to right living and spiritual practice.

Our flow of funds is approximately $30,000 each month. When our cash flow is greater, as it will be, more advertising will be done, more literature will be distributed, and larger regional seminars will be scheduled.

When we announced a ten million dollar funding project last year, some of our members asked why that amount was chosen and what would be done with it. Some of the money will be used to expand current outreach programs; a major portion will be wisely invested in our endowment fund to provide regular income in the near and distant future.

Most of our funding is provided by our members who donate

monthly, quarterly, or annually. Donations of $10,000 to $100,000 are occasionally received. Money from the estate of members who thoughtfully named our ministry in their will is received from time to time.

Including CSA in a will or as an insurance beneficiary can be helpful in the future. While distant-future possibilities are pleasant to know about, I am primarily interested in doing what can be done now.

Our headquarters property is debt-free; bills are paid on time; and I do not receive royalties for books published by our publishing department. Donations received from members and at seminars, and income from book sales, are used for ongoing ministry purposes, new projects, and outreach.

We recently purchased a new computer for editing videos and CD and DVD duplicating equipment ($7,000), and will soon begin distribution of audio cassettes, CDs, and DVDs of some of my seminar talks. Information about this worthwhile project will be in our future mailings.

In January I will visit India for two or three weeks to present free public lectures, seminars, and initiations in several cities: Mumbai [Bombay], Pune, New Delhi, Bangalore, and possibly Hyderabad and Chennai [Madras]. Arrangements are being made by Mr. R. P. Jain of Motilal Banarsidass which has published ten of my books. My India book royalties are given to an orphanage in Delhi. Approximately $20,000 for advance advertising, hall rental, and travel expenses is budgeted for this outreach project; a small amount to serve the hundreds of truth seekers who will gather in each city.

There is not enough time to plan a CSA pilgrimage group tour in January. Our members in India, and any member who privately travels there in January, are invited to attend my lectures and seminars. If you have friends in India, inform them about the programs.

Help share knowledge of kriya yoga with others by using the

enclosed participation form in accord with your ability to do it, your sense of duty as a kriya initiate, and what seems to you to be the best way you can participate.

While you are learning to swim in the sea of life, you can help others learn how to swim. – *Paramahansa Yogananda*

New

The Science of Self-Realization

A Guide to Spiritual Practice in the Kriya Yoga Tradition

Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras: New Translation, With Commentary

Also : The Shandilya Upanishad; Answers to Questions About the Spiritual Path; and an Extensive Glossary

Hardcover 144 Pages $10.00

In 1920, as Paramahansa Yogananda prepared to depart from India, Sri Yukteswar told him to teach the practices of kriya yoga to his students in America—which he faithfully did for thirty-one years. In the 1930s or 1940s (I am not certain of the exact time) he taught a series of classes on Patanjali's yoga-sutras. His spoken words were later transcribed and may be published in the future.

My first commentary on the yoga-sutras was published in 1964. I have written more commentaries through the years as my understanding has improved and my personal experiences have verified what Patanjali wrote almost two thousand years ago. My new commentary, written during this past spring and summer, is now published. If you have not yet requested a copy, use the enclosed order form, or e-mail.

INDIA: JANUARY 2005

A printed schedule will be mailed in October to our members and friends in India. For general information, contact these Motilal Banarsidass bookstores.

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Dialogue

The Traditions, Philosophy & Practices of Kriya Yoga

Send questions and inquiries for future use in our ongoing discussions. Mail, fax 706-782-4560, or e-mail csainc@davis.org

What is the best way to financially support CSA activities?

If you are CSA member, donate according to your means. If you are not yet a CSA member, become a member. If your income in small, regularly donate a small amount. If you have a larger income, regularly donate a larger amount. If you are rich, donate generously from time to time. A good guideline to giving is to give to the extent that you feel that you have done the best that you can do. Be mindful that you are not giving to me or to an institution dominated by a board of self-serving individuals. Your giving makes possible the uplift of many thousands of spiritual aspirants around the world. Our duty (and opportunity) is to provide others who are receptive with helpful information and encouragement.

Explain How to Experience Samadhi.

Samadhi is experienced when attention and awareness are unified with the object of meditative contemplation. How this can be accomplished is precisely described in Patanjali's yoga-sutras, the most important kriya yoga text to frequently read.

Mastery of attention that enables samadhi to be quickly experienced can be accomplished by alert practice. When you are meditating, be attentive to what you are doing and to what is perceived and experienced. When you are not meditating, be alert while engaged in ordinary activities. If you are not alert and discerning when you are not meditating, it will be difficult to be alert and discerning when you sit to meditate.

Observe your thoughts and feelings during the course of an

ordinary day. Do you intentionally choose your thoughts and feelings, or do you passively allow them to be determined by moods or by reactions to what you see or hear?

When you meditate, do you aspire to be fully awake, or do you mechanically practice a meditation technique, sit and wait hoping for something to happen, or allow thoughts and emotions to dominate your awareness?

Do you accomplish purposes skillfully and efficiently, or do you allow events that occur or uncontrolled thoughts and feelings to distract your attention?

Are you living effectively with a clear sense of meaningful purpose? Kriya yoga practice includes everything that you do. (Read sutras 1 to 45 in the second chapter of the yoga-sutras.)

Do you meditate on a regular schedule? Daily meditation practiced to the stage of superconsciousness will anchor your life in the Infinite and result in psychological transformation and progressive spiritual growth.

When you meditate, sit until you are established in a calm, alert state of consciousness. After practicing kriya pranayama, keep your attention and awareness in the higher region of the brain (crown chakra). Experience the silence. Contemplate, and abide in, a pure-conscious state. This is the highest kind of meditation practice. All other routines are but preliminary, preparatory practices that should result in transcendence.

Compare satori, nirvana, and samadhi.

Their meanings are related. *Satori* is sudden insight that enlightens (provides knowledge of one's true nature and/or of higher realities). *Nirvana* is the extinguishing or eliminating of something. Buddhists use this word to indicate spiritual enlightenment that transcends all delusions and illusions. *Samadhi* provides liberating insight and transcends modified states of consciousness which confine awareness.

Do we have the ability to access multiple dimensions while in this realm?

Some people have (or claim to have) the ability to do this. Our major purpose in this world should be to live effectively and complete our spiritual growth. As we do this, insights that provide knowledge of other realities can be had.

What can I tell someone who is approaching the end of human life, who does not have any metaphysical understanding, and inquires about the next level of experience?

Tell them, "You will continue to live after you leave this realm." Advise them to cultivate peace of mind and faith. When possible, sit with them from time to time in meditative silence. Let their circumstances remind you that you, too, will one day depart from this world. Prepare for that eventual event by improving your knowledge of your real nature and your relationship with the Infinite. A peculiar characteristic of the human condition is the tendency to think of physical death as an event that only other people are fated to experience. Until we are spiritually awake, physical death is more easily talked about than confronted and gracefully experienced.

Do all religious or spiritual paths lead to God?

Although many people say it, it is not true. To say this is like saying all foods are nutritious, all roads lead to the same destination, everything happens for the best, or that all actions will produce the same results.

Some religious beliefs and spiritual practices are based on misguided opinions, faulty reasoning, or superstitions. While we can respect the rights of others to have their opinions and to worship or practice as they are inclined, we should have knowledge that is accurate and choose spiritual practices that provide ideal results.

Some kriya yoga teachers emphasize contemplation on inner light, sound, and vibration while having awareness in the crown chakra. Paramahansa Yogananda often emphasized concentration at the spiritual eye while contemplating light and sound. Did he also mention being aware of a vibration?

Yes, he described Om as the cosmic vibration of the power of supreme Consciousness; that a mediator should listen to it, feel it, and merge attention and awareness with it.

I recently read that some people believe that in a previous incarnation Paramahansa Yogananda was Arjuna, a central character in the Bhagavad Gita. What do you think about this?

In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna is depicted as a disciple of Krishna. The word *Arjuna* means "energetic self-control and firm resolve to accomplish" noble purposes. *Krishna* represents a devotee's own enlightened consciousness, the source of truth that, when it emerges, illumines and liberates one's consciousness. The Bhagavad Gita is an allegory, a story that explains how to live and awaken to Self- and God-realization, rather than as an eyewitness report of events that actually occurred in an era of human history. To say that someone was Arjuna would be like saying that a person now living is an incarnation of a fictional character.

I am interested in meditating with other kriya yoga initiates. How can I do this?

Refer to the directory in *Truth Journal* to see if one of our meditation groups is active in your area. If one is not near you, organize one. Request a guide to starting a meditation group from the CSA office.

There are Self-Realization Fellowship meditation groups in several communities in the U.S., Europe, and India. Look in the telephone book or inquire among your kriya yoga friends to

locate one. When attending a SRF meditation session, do it for the purpose of meditating; not for the purpose of talking about the teachings.

If you live in California, visit SRF temples in San Diego, Encinitas, Fullerton, Hollywood, Pacific Palisades, Pasadena, or Richmond (near Oakland). If you live in Phoenix, visit the SRF temple on North Central Avenue.

Some of my friends were initiated into kriya yoga meditation practices by kriya teachers who are not related to you or to Paramahansa Yogananda. Their practices are similar, but not the same, as you teach. Why is there a difference?

Kriya teachers (usually) teach what they were taught. In India, some kriya teachers teach different mantras and a mild variation of the basic meditation techniques.

The major emphasis should be on internalizing attention, then sitting in the tranquil silence, attentive, patiently waiting and observing what occurs. When practicing meditation, feel that you are sitting in the ocean of God.

I want to represent our kriya tradition as a teacher and be able to initiate others. How should I proceed?

Live a balanced, well-ordered life, acquire knowledge of the principles and practices of kriya yoga, and maintain your meditation practices. Attend retreats at CSA headquarters and talk more with me so we can have a closer relationship. I will work with you to help you prepare to represent this work.

In 1951, I was with Paramahansaji and a small group of my brother disciples. One young disciple expressed a desire to teach others and asked when he could be ordained. Our guru gently replied, "What do you have to offer others? Your time will come. Prepare yourself now." Then, speaking to all of us, he said, "In the future, millions [of people] will be seeking God and there will not be enough qualified teachers to meet their needs."

To represent our kriya tradition, one must be reasonably intelligent, dedicated to right living and spiritual practice, able and willing to learn, and humble. It must be must understood that a teacher-representive is but an agent through which the teachings and the spiritual force that flows from God through the lineage of gurus are transmitted.

Paramahansaji often told his disciples, "I am not the guru. God is the guru. I am only God's servant." This is the understanding that a kriya teacher must have.

I have been a truth seeker for many years, yet do not seem to be any closer to knowing what I want to know. I don't seem to be making progress on my spiritual path.

It is normal to "seek" when we first become interested in knowing the facts of life and want to be spiritually awake. It is helpful, however, to know that seeking can be an endless endeavor of constantly looking, experimenting, or hoping that results will eventually occur. While acquiring knowledge that is useful, it will be helpful to cultivate Self-awareness, to know that you are now a flawless, pure-conscious unit of one Reality and think, feel, and live from that knowing. As you do this, there can be a shift of viewpoint that may occur suddenly or in stages that will result in Self-realization.

Continue to maintain your wholesome lifestyle routines, improve your understanding of metaphysical principles, and meditate to keep your mind calm and clarify your awareness.

The major obstacle to Self-realization is ego-confinement: thinking and feeling that our limited sense of Self-identity is our real nature. When this is transcended, realization of what we are, and have always been, is actualized. Before we are Self- realized, the habit of being egocentric may result in endeavors to maintain a sense of independent existence, to want to experience some of the benefits of spiritual practice and be more humanly happy, but not want to be enlightened to the extent that our ordinary

circumstances are different.

Complete kriya yoga practice (not just meditation) should be intensive: intentional and concentrated. For many people, intensive kriya yoga practice will require radical changes in the way they think and behave.

What is the real purpose of a guru-disciple relationship?

The real purpose is to liberate the disciple's consciousness from all conditions that confine it. Although the relationship can be that of compatible friendship, a guru's major interest is the disciple's spiritual awakening and soul liberation. When a guru tells the disciple, "I want you to be like me," he (or she) means, "I want you to be spiritually enlightened."

Few disciples (and those who ask to be disciples) know the guru's major role in the relationship, and what they need to do to benefit from the relationship. They may expect the guru to do for them what they need to do for themselves or they may consider the guru's instructions to be recommendations to be considered rather than to be immediately followed. They may "hear" only what they want to hear or distort what they hear to serve their own self-centered purposes. When they are confronted by a need to change their modes of thinking and behavior they may withdraw from the relationship, avoid communication with their guru, neglect metaphysical studies and spiritual practices, or become preoccupied with ordinary activities and relationships which provide them with a false sense of personal comfort and security.

Another mistake that some disciples make is to think of the guru as an icon, a symbolic representation of divine qualities to be idolized: excessively, devotionally admired or worshipped but not emulated (become equal to or like). The equality or same-ness that a spiritually enlightened guru desires for disciples is that they, too, be fully spiritually enlightened. As disciples, we have to see beyond the guru's personality characteristics to the guru's core essence, which is pure consciousness.

On one occasion, when a few disciples were with my guru, I noticed that he was somewhat withdrawn. Slowly, as though carefully choosing his words, he quietly said, "From now on, I will outwardly seem to you to be as you have known me. Inside, I am detached and free. Only God dwells here [in this body] now."

My guru's words and behaviors were always thoughtfully appropriate. Usually gentle and patient when relating to his disciples, he always emphasized the importance of living a God-centered life and faithful adherence to spiritual practices.

I want to be fully liberated in this incarnation. What can I do to be liberated?

Constant, fervent aspiration to be liberated will awaken your soul forces, attract favorable, supportive circumstances, and empower your intensive spiritual practices.

Discard untrue beliefs and opinions. Learn to accurately perceive what is observed or experienced.

Improve your understanding of your real nature, God, and physical, mental, and spiritual laws of cause and effect so that you can live effectively.

Learn to be superconscious at all times, when meditating and when engaged in ordinary activities and relationships.

While expressing through your mind and body, know that you are an immortal spiritual being. Constantly endeavor to live up to your highest potential to be spiritually awake.

There is a fundamental purpose for our lives. To recognize it ... we must look beyond our immediate goals to what we ultimately want to accomplish ... and consider life's highest potential for development.

– *Paramahansa Yogananda*

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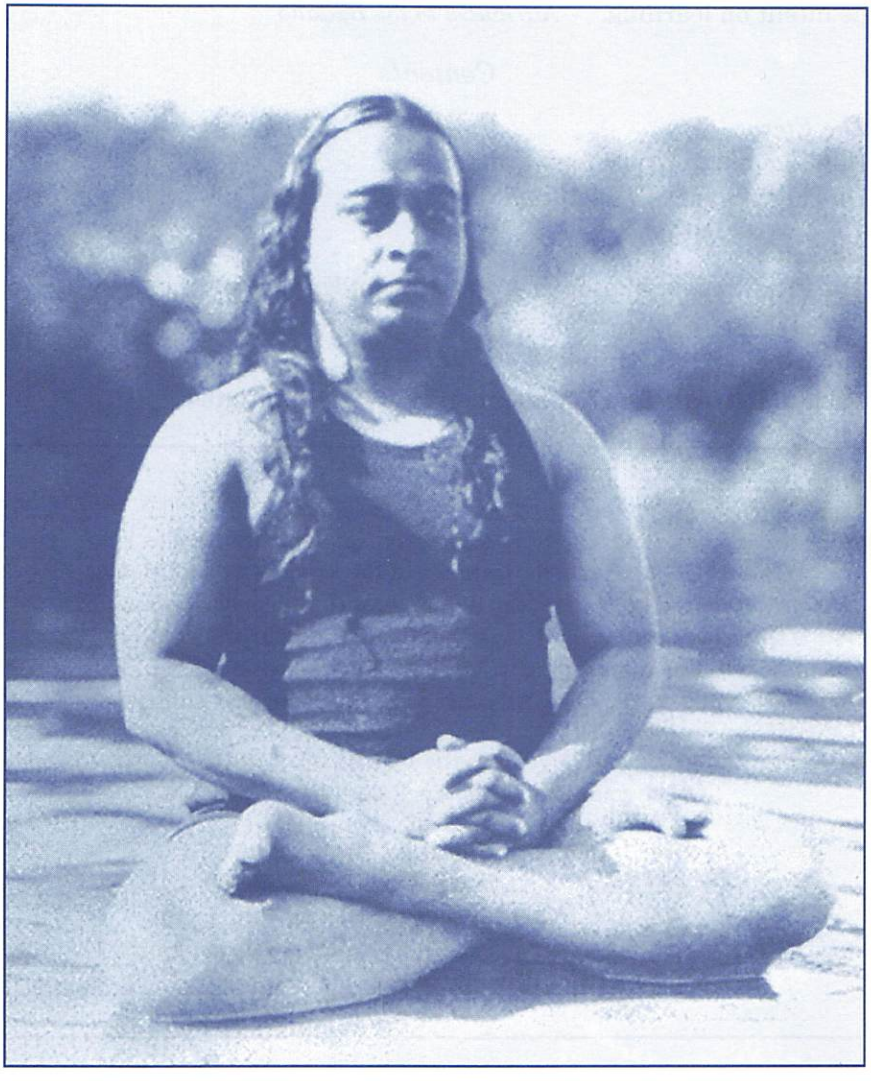
Regular summer retreat schedules open to everyone are published in *Truth Journal* and our newsletter.

radiance

Published Quarterly for Kriya Yoga Initiates

January – March 2005



Paramahansa Yogananda (*Early Years*)

The mind generates countless thoughts which weaken it and veil perception of Reality. These produce impressions and tendencies in the mind which are mostly dormant. When the mind is rid of them, the veil vanishes in a moment like mist at sunrise. – *Ancient yoga text*

Whoever shall be a refuge unto themselves, who shall not seek an external refuge, but holding fast to the truth as their lamp, it is they who shall attain the topmost height [spiritual enlightenment]. But they must be intent on learning. – *Attributed to the Buddha*

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How Complete Kriya Yoga Practice Quickens Spiritual Evolution

Serene, fearless, established in self-control, with mental impulses subdued, contemplating the supreme Reality, the devotee should sit, devoted to the highest realization. – *Bhagavad Gita 6:14*

Higher samadhi is preceded by disciplined endeavor, attentive meditation practice, insights, unobstructed memory of prior subtle perceptions, unwavering faith, and the unveiling and emergence of innate knowledge. – *Patanjali's yoga-sutras 1:20*

Orderly spiritual evolution (Latin, *evolvēre*, to unroll) occurs when psychological and physical conditions allow our innate urge to be more fully conscious to be influential. Just as the enlivening forces of supreme Consciousness that pervade the realm of Nature impel the growth and development of living things and the cosmic processes that influence human affairs, the enlivening forces of our being contribute to our spiritual growth. *Complete* kriya yoga practice removes all mental and physical obstacles that confine individualized consciousness and obscure perceptions of what is true.

I emphasize the necessity of *complete* kriya yoga practice because many spiritual aspirants mistakenly presume kriya yoga to be only the practice of meditation techniques. Some people who ask to learn about kriya yoga are surprised when I inform them that complete practice also includes disciplined thinking and behavior; wholesome, purposeful living; study of metaphysical principles; and discernment of the difference between their ordinary states of consciousness and their pure-conscious essence of being. Doing these things contributes to psychological and physical health, refines the nervous system and brain, and elicits states of superconsciousness that enable us to experience our true nature and the wholeness of life.

Complete kriya yoga practice may require radical changes in thinking and behavior. Thinking must be rational, emotions must be stable, actions must be purposeful and decisive, and nonessential activities must be avoided or minimized. A kriya yogi should constantly aspire to Self- and God-realization and conform all thoughts, feelings, and actions to that goal.

Mental attitudes, thoughts, moods, and habits that confine awareness and keep it ordinary (modified and limited) should be renounced. If they cannot be immediately discarded, they should be gradually replaced with mental attitudes, thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that are entirely constructive.

The easiest way to make necessary changes is to adhere to a daily routine of metaphysical study and attentive meditation practice. The mind will then be nourished with positive ideas and superconscious influences will become more pronounced. Your daily study and meditation routine will stabilize your life. You will then be able to remain soul-centered while performing duties and relating to others.

Circulating your life forces through the spine and brain during practice of kriya pranayama purifies your mind and astral body that interpenetrates your physical body, improves the brain's capacity to process perceptions, and clarifies your awareness.

When your life forces flow freely during kriya pranayama practice, they will continue to circulate after your meditation session while you are engaged in normal activities. Your mind and nervous system will then be continuously refreshed and it will be easier for you to always be soul-centered, inspired, and Self-motivated to think constructively and live effectively.

When the devotee is established in superconsciousness, meditation is natural and spontaneous. Then, when one is not meditating, its benefits are enjoyed. – *Lahiri Mahasaya*

The Traditions, Philosophy & Practices of Kriya Yoga

Send questions and inquiries for future use in our ongoing discussions. Mail, fax 706-782-4560, or e-mail csainc@csa-davis.org

What is the easiest way to move from conceptual knowledge of everything as being a manifestation of infinite Consciousness to actual, direct perception of it?

Continue to contemplate what is true: one Reality is expressing as everything. Insight will gradually (or suddenly) emerge in your consciousness and the processes of manifestation will be accurately known.

Do visions of other planes of existence or extraordinary soul powers have to be obvious prior to enlightenment, or can one directly know their true nature?

No. Visions indicate mental or emotional unrest. Improved powers of perception can be used to live effectively and complete your spiritual growth. It is not necessary to have supernormal powers to be Self- and God-realized. Some devotees experience Self-realization because their devotion enables them to merge their attention and awareness in pure consciousness. Others may gradually or suddenly awaken to complete Self- and God-realization.

If thoughts and emotions are experienced as passing waves across the screen of awareness, is this useful, or does one have to be free of even these perceptions to be Self-realized?

When meditating, thoughts and emotions may continue to be perceived until subliminal influences become dormant. When pure superconsciousness (samadhi) is experienced, you will not be aware of thoughts or emotions.

Paramahansa Yogananda conducting a memorial service for Mahatma Gandhi. *Photo, Los Angeles Times, 1947.*

Is it selfish to avoid the company of relatives whose behavior is self-centered and who talk constantly about unimportant matters—when you prefer to be peaceful and quiet even if they need your help?

There is no need to spend too much time with relatives (or others) who are egocentric or primarily interested in matters of minor importance. If you are obligated to provide care for them, cheerfully and efficiently perform your duties without being mentally or emotionally disturbed by their actions or comments.

Do spiritual masters like Paramahansa Yogananda experience omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence?

Spiritually enlightened people either actually experience those attributes of supreme Consciousness or can intuitively be aware of and comprehend them.

Explain the difference between Sanatana Dharma and Kriya Yoga.

Sanatana, eternal or everlasting; *dharma*, that which supports and upholds. Often translated as "The Eternal Religion." "The timeless way of right living" is more accurate.

Kriya, "to do" something. *Yoga* is "unification" of attention and awareness with changeless Reality. Complete kriya yoga practice is "the timeless way of right living."

How can one work for peace in the world other than attending to one's own inner peace?

Live peacefully. Do what you are able to do to help others be peaceful. The greatest need today is for more people to be informed about spiritual realities. Many people in all parts of the world also have physical needs to be satisfied if they are to have peace of mind.

You have recommended that kriya pranayama not be practiced when one is "psychologically disturbed." Be more specific. I have practiced it while feeling emotionally upset and it has a calming effect. Could meditation be a more direct way that enables one to avoid dealing with troublesome underlying issues?

Perhaps I should have said that meditation is not advised for a person who is *severely* psychologically disturbed to the extent that hallucinations, uncontrollable erratic behaviors, or other symptoms of psychosis are commonly experienced. When emotional disturbance is due to ordinary causes, meditation practice can have a calming effect. Underlying issues can then be more easily confronted and resolved.

My surroundings are not supportive of my spiritual questing. Most of my family members have negative mental outlooks. I strive to live a well-balanced life. This is difficult to do when people around me express different views. Is there a mantra or an affirmation that can help me?

Affirmations or mantras are not necessary. Because your circumstances are not known to me, I cannot advise regarding how to change them. When others express negative opinions, ignore what is said while remaining peacefully soul-centered. Do what you can by your calm, cheerful demeanor to elevate the consciousness of your home environment.

The more my consciousness expands, the more it feels like I've known people [I meet for the first time] before. Is this common as one awakens spiritually?

Yes, it is natural to feel a spiritual kinship with others as you become more spiritually aware. It does not mean that you have known them before. See beyond outer appearances to the innate, divine nature of everyone. Doing this will invite their innate soul qualities to come forth.

Do you have disciples who will continue to transmit kriya yoga teachings and blessings to others?

Yes, there are several persons whom I have initiated who represent our kriya yoga tradition and will continue to do so.

It seems that many laws in our society are outdated, keep a few people in power, and prevent the common man from living freely or happily. When we are attuned to universal laws of cause and effect, do the limiting, man-made laws cease to be as limiting?

You did not mention the "laws of society" that you think to be no longer useful. In a democratic society, laws are agreed upon for the purpose of having an orderly social order rather than to keep a few people in power. Why not adapt to your environment and quietly continue your spiritual practices?

I was initiated two years ago and am gradually increasing the number of kriya pranayamas. What is a useful number to do?

Gradually increase the number until you can do 108 and stay with that number for a while. The flows of life force will then be inclined to continue afterwards. After practicing kriya pranayama, sit in the silence, absorbed in Om.

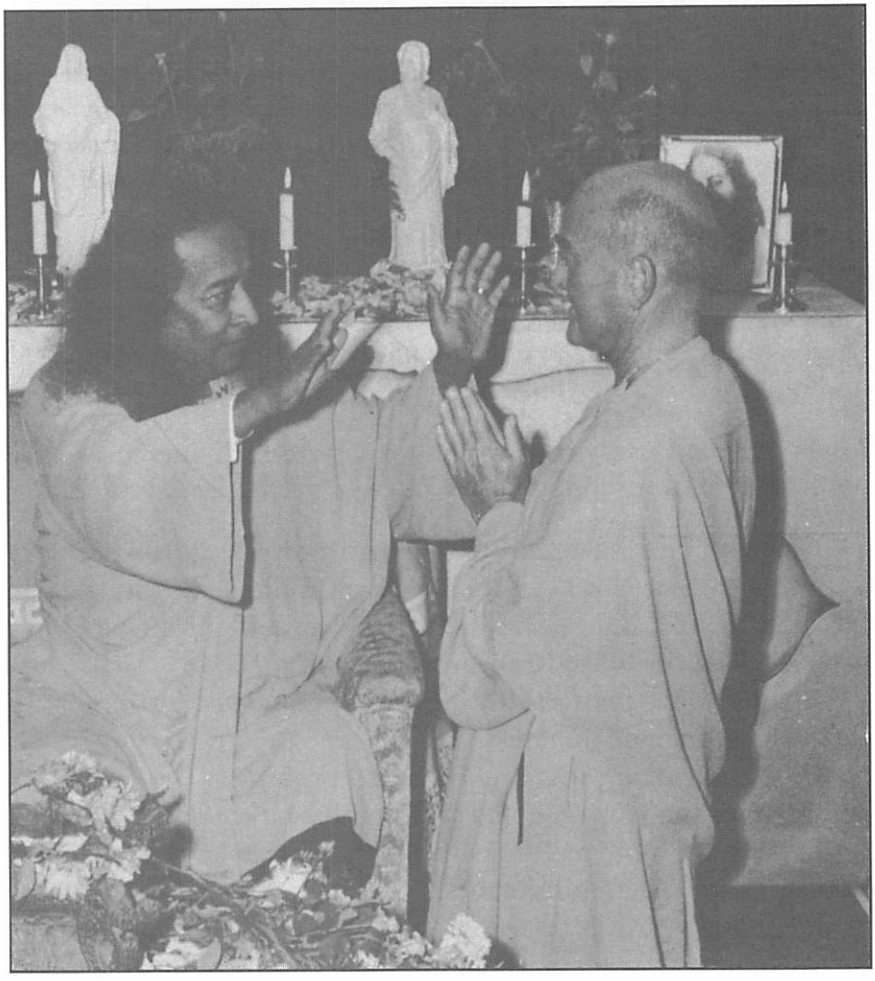
If you cannot comfortably do 108 pranayamas, do 58, rest in the silence, then do 50 more.

Or 54 in the morning and 54 in the evening.

Or 36 in the morning, at noon, and in the evening.

It more useful to practice deeply and rest in the calm silence than to strive for high numbers.

Some kriya initiates report that doing pranayamas two or three times a day keeps their life forces actively flowing all of the time. Their regular practice also keeps them focused on their major purposes and motivates and empowers them to more easily control their thoughts and behaviors.



Paramahansa Yogananda blessing James Lynn
Los Angeles, 1950

Is it possible for a spiritually enlightened teacher to transmit a samadhi experience to a disciple?

It can happen when the student is receptive. The teacher may blend his or her consciousness with that of the student's consciousness, use will or intention to clarify the student's consciousness, or transmit a flow of life force that influences the student's front and/or higher brain centers.

How Sri Yukteswar blessed Paramahansa Yogananda with an experience in cosmic consciousness is described in chapter 14 of *Autobiography of a Yogi*.

At times, when I was with Paramahansa Yogananda, I was able to easily experience clear states of awareness. On one occasion, when James Lynn, a spiritually advanced disciple of our guru, placed one hand on my forehead and one hand on my chest, I experienced a flow of life force from his hands that produced an ecstatic, expanded state of consciousness.

Superconsciousness, our core state of being, is ordinarily obscured because our attention may be overly involved with thoughts, emotions, and external conditions, and confined by a limited sense of self.

Viewing thoughts, emotions, and external conditions with objectivity, and being aware of our true nature enables us to be superconscious. Because of our inclination to experience what we desire to experience, it is helpful to constantly aspire to be superconscious and to believe it to be possible. Doubt, apathy, restlessness, emotional instability, and preoccupation with nonuseful thoughts, feelings, and external involvements should be avoided.

Replace debilitating habits with habits that are supportive of your spiritual aspirations. If superconsciousness is not then immediately experienced, you will at least have chosen the ideal, wholesome way to live that will allow spiritual growth to occur more easily. Remove all obstacles to Self-realization and it will naturally unfold.

When a person is Self-realized, does meditation still have to be practiced?

Until Self-realization is permanent, meditation should be practiced to further purify the mind and eliminate subliminal impressions that may, if aroused, blur one's awareness. In his Bhagavad Gita commentary Sri Yukteswar wrote:

If in this [early] state [of Self-realization] one does not continue with kriya practice, delusion [may] gradually emerge and again cover up the revelation of [pure] Consciousness.

Even when the mind is completely purified, one may choose to regularly (or occasionally) meditate to withdraw from outer circumstances and be absorbed in pure consciousness.

Note: The Bhagavad Gita and Patanjali's yoga-sutras are the basic texts that should be frequently read by kriya initiates to: 1) acquire helpful information; 2) be inspired and motivated to persist in kriya yoga practice; 3) have insights and superconscious perceptions and experiences verified.

If one sincerely aspires to Self-realization and is dedicated to spiritual practices, how long will it take to be Self-realized?

Awakening to Self-realization can occur quickly, or it may require years of persistent practice. A person who is already somewhat spiritually aware may awaken quickly. One whose awareness is blurred, has mental conflicts, or is emotionally unstable, may first have to overcome those obstacles. Anyone who is firmly resolved to be Self-realized can awaken to that free state of consciousness.

I have known devotees who were able make fast progress; some who had the potential to make fast progress, but became distracted and lost interest in spiritual matters; and some with difficulties who persisted until they were successful.

Is kriya yoga practice for everyone, or is there a different way for other truth seekers?

Right thinking, wholesome living, study of higher realities, prayer, and meditation is for everyone. Even if the words *kriya yoga* are not used to describe this way of living, the practices are the same. *Kriya* means "the performance of actions" that purify the mind and unify (*yoga*) a truth seeker's attention and awareness with pure consciousness. The only *way* to Self-realization is to awaken from ordinary states of consciousness to Self- and God-awareness.

When friends ask about meditation practice, is it all right to teach them how to meditate?

Yes, teach them the basic procedure: how to sit and how to use a simple mantra (a word or word-phrase) to focus their attention. Give them a copy of *An Easy Guide to Meditation* and encourage them to read *Seven Lessons in Conscious Living* in which all of the basic meditation techniques are explained. If I visit your community to present a meditation seminar, tell them about the program.

I am conscious when I meditate, but not always as alert as I want to be. What can I do to stay alert and concentrated?

Remember that the purpose of meditation practice is to be established in Self-knowing. Keep your attention focused in the front and higher regions of the brain.

Practice a meditation technique to involve your attention until you are concentrated, then sit in the silence, waiting and observing. Disregard thoughts and feelings that come and go. Aspire to experience your true nature as pure consciousness. Let meditation be an enjoyable experience. Feel that you are abiding in the infinite ocean of pure consciousness (which is actually true) and melt in it.

News

With the autumn 2004 issue of *Radiance*, printed forms were included for dialogue questions and to affirm a commitment to sharing kriya yoga with an awakening world. I would like to be able to report that the response was overwhelming. Thirty forms (3 percent of the total that were sent) were received. I do not know whether this indicates lack of interest in these matters or merely preoccupation with personal concerns. My thanks to each of you who did respond. The information that you shared and your helpful comments are appreciated.

If you have friends in the following countries, inform them of my meditation seminars and kriya yoga initiations.

India, January 5 – 25
Mumbai (Bombay), Pune, New Delhi, Kolkata (Calcutta), and Bangalore. Contact Mr. R. P. Jain: mlbd@vsnl.com

Germany (near Munich), April 1 – 3
Contact Harald and Marlies Reiske: info@kriya-yoga.de

Italy (Genova), April 5 – 6
Contact Furio Sclano: fsyukteswarji@yahoo.com
Also see this well-illustrated website: www.guruji.it

London, April 10, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Holiday Inn-Kings Cross/Bloomsbury,
1 Kings Cross Road.
Reservations: contact CSA office in the U.S.
or in the U.K.: [redacted] richardfish@tiscali.co.uk

Ghana (Accra), April 15, 16
E-mail Samuel Sasu: healthworksgh@yahoo.com

MEDITATION SEMINARS

Donation Basis at All Locations
Kriya Yoga initiation at Costa Mesa, San Jose & Orlando.
Reservations required at these* locations.

*Costa Mesa, Calif.: Saturday, March 5, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Holiday Inn, 3131 South Bristol Street. 1 miles west of Orange County airport. Off I-405, south on Bristol Street.

El Cajon, Calif.: Sunday, March 6, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Christ Church Unity, 311 Highland Avenue.

Phoenix, Arizona: Monday, March 7, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Holiday Inn, 4321 North Central Avenue.
Between Indian School and Camelback Roads.

Albuquerque, New Mexico: Wed., March 9, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Radisson Hotel, 2500 Carlisle Blvd. NE.

*San Jose, Calif: Saturday, March 12, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Center for Spiritual Enlightenment,
1146 University Avenue.
Tel: 408-283-0221 Fax (408) 283-1722
e-mail: info@CSEcenter.org web site: www.CSEcenter.org
Make reservations with Center for Spiritual Enlightenment.

*Orlando, Florida: Saturday, May 7, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
LaQuinta Inn, 626 Lee Road. (Winter Park Area).
Lee Road Exit of I-4 north Orlando.

Costa Mesa and Orlando Reservations

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- Request travel directions if needed.

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Regular summer retreat schedules open to everyone are published in *Truth Journal* and our newsletter.

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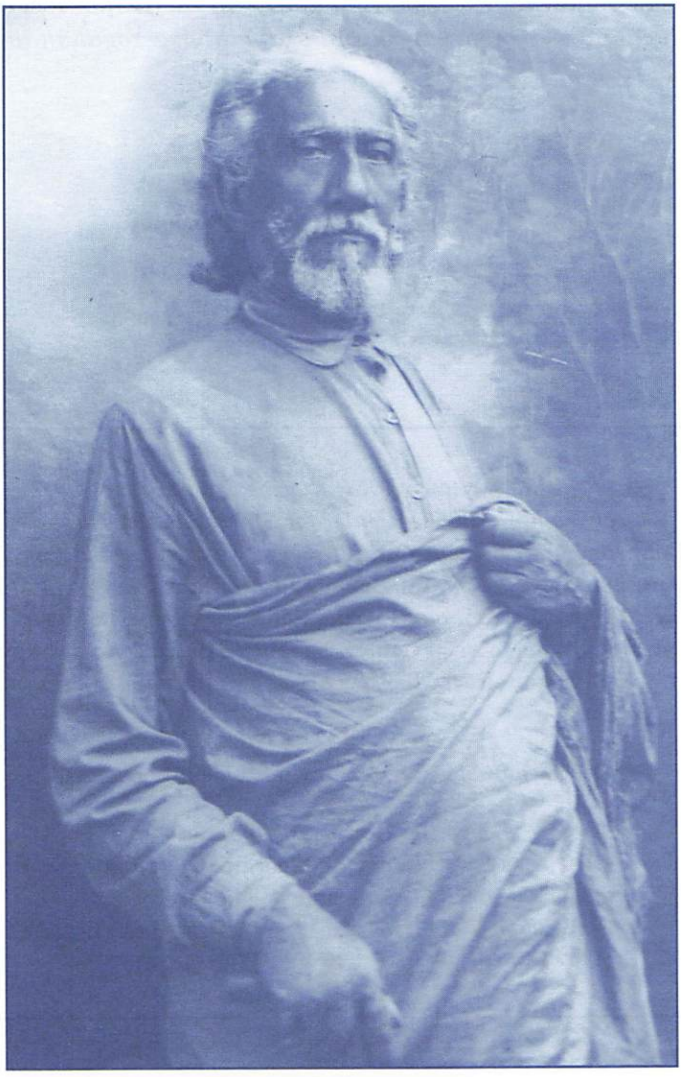

Swami Sri Yukteswar

Note

As this issue of Radiance is being prepared for the printer, I have recently returned from India, and am writing a book which will be published in early summer of this year.

The following excerpts (not edited in their final form) are from chapters two and three of *Paramahansa Yogananda As I Knew Him.*

ROY EUGENE DAVIS

Written by Roy Eugene Davis
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Chapter Two

Early Experiences With My Guru

I arrived at the international headquarters of Self-Realization Fellowship on Friday evening, December 23, 1949, a few minutes after 6 p.m.

When I knocked on the door of a cottage just inside the driveway entrance, a man, who appeared to be about sixty years of age, welcomed me and took me to the men's dining room, which was then in the basement level of the main building. There, I was introduced to several young resident disciples and invited to join them at their evening meal.

After supper, a young man, who I later learned was responsible for coordinating the daily work and meditation schedules of the male disciples, led me up a stairway and to a secluded area in the main entrance room where we could privately talk. He inquired about my background and asked how I had heard about the organization and Paramahansa Yogananda. Within a few minutes, when the muted sounds of a descending elevator emanated from a nearby hallway, he stood up, turned toward the hallway, and exclaimed, "Master is coming!" I also stood up and turned toward the hallway with alert anticipation.

Paramahansa Yogananda came into the room, followed by two young women disciples, Faye Wright and her sister Virginia. He was wearing a dark blue overcoat, a white neck scarf, and a light blue felt hat. Standing in front of me, he looked into my eyes, smiled kindly as he shook my hand with a gentle grasp, and quietly asked, "How old are you?"

"Eighteen, Sir," I responded.

"Do your parents know you are here?" he inquired.

"It's all right, Sir," I told him.

Touching my forehead with his hand in a gesture of blessing, he murmured, "That's good. I'll talk with you again."

Then, with Faye and Virginia, he went to a dark blue Cadillac sedan that I had earlier seen in the driveway near the steps of the porch. The young man who was with me then took me outside and along a garden path to a small, one-story house that was used as a men's dormitory.

While I unpacked my suitcase, I was informed that the following morning everyone would be gathering in the headquarters building to attend an all-day meditation.

After a night of refreshing sleep, and breakfast, I mingled with a group of one hundred or more resident disciples and visiting students.

Before long, as Master, accompanied by James Lynn, a spiritually advanced disciple, came into the room, I noticed that he was in a superconscious state: observant, yet with an aura of remoteness about him. When they had gone into the chapel and sat in chairs near the altar, ushers invited everyone to enter the chapel and be seated.

Master spoke warm words of welcome, expressed his happiness to be with us, remarked on the significance of the Holy Season, mentioned the names of a few disciples and acknowledged their years of devotion and service, and talked about God and the lineage of gurus. He referred to God as a supreme Being beyond creation and as the cosmic energy expressing in and as Nature. His settled composure established an intimate mood.

Dr. Minot Lewis, at the organ, began to play one of the devotional chants that Master had, years before, adapted from those of his native land. "Chanting will enable you to win half of the battle in meditation," Master said. "When you chant with fervent devotion to God, all stray thoughts will flee from your mind. Then, you will know God's presence!"

Group chanting continued for several minutes. As the final refrains faded, we were encouraged to "dive deep" in meditation. After an extended duration of silence, Master talked quietly about God and the usefulness of devotion, and led a another chanting

session which was followed by more silent meditation. At noon, a short rest break was announced.

During the afternoon session, as Master was speaking about various aspects of God, Mr. Lynn slumped in his chair, his face suffused in a beatific glow. A few moments later, when he was again composed and sitting upright, Master chuckled and said, "When I talk like this, he always goes into ecstasy."

After the six-hour meditation session, Master spoke for a few minutes and pronounced a benediction, then stood at the chapel entrance to bless each person as they departed.

On Sunday morning I attended the service at the Self-Realization Church of All Religions (as it was then named) on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood. Master opened the service by leading the congregation in a responsive prayer, read a few verses from the Bhagavad Gita and The New Testament, and added a brief commentary. An interlude of devotional chanting and silent meditation preceded his sermon-lesson, which lasted about an hour. During his forthright, extemporaneous talk, he shared interesting anecdotes, spoke of a few saints he had known, described some of his personal experiences, and exhorted everyone to be dedicated to the spiritual path until they were Self-realized.

After the service, I was approached by Myrna Brown, who informed me, "Master will see you after he has seen the people who are scheduled for interviews. I'll let you know when he's ready to see you."

Late that afternoon, I was taken to a small room next to the stage and altar area in the temple. Master, sitting on a small couch, motioned for me to sit beside him. In a barely audible tone, he asked, "What can I do for you?"

"I want to be your disciple, Sir," I responded.

He seemed pleased. "This is not a path of escapism, you know?" he quietly informed me.

"I know that, Sir," I told him.

He then asked about my health. When I assured him that I

felt well, he said, "Let's see," and felt my pulse at the wrist. A few moments later, he murmured, "Yes, you are all right."

He then said, "You can stay." He told me to read only his writings during the first year, to attend to duties that would be assigned to me, and to meditate regularly. As he touched my forehead, his concluding words were, "Read a little. Meditate more. Think of God all the time."

That evening, disciples and visiting guests gathered in the main room of the headquarters building for the annual Christmas dinner. While awaiting Master's arrival, some of them mingled in small groups to enjoy quiet interaction with friends.

Mr. Lynn approached the group of monks that I was with, introduced himself to me, and offered personal advice. He recommended that I meditate on a regular schedule for short periods of time until I could meditate comfortably, then meditate longer and more deeply. He then told me, "That is what I found to be helpful when I first began to meditate after meeting Master."

Before long, Master came into the room, everyone took their places at long tables, and large bowls and platters of food were brought from the kitchen.

After the dessert was served, Master spoke for a little more than an hour. He acknowledged the dedication of the disciples who were there and emphasized the importance of letting our desire to do things be disciplined by wisdom. He then invited everyone to "come forward and receive God's blessings from my hands."

During the next few weeks I participated with the monks in the morning and evening routines of exercise and meditation and was attentive to my assigned duties: sweeping the sidewalks and driveways, cleaning some of the buildings, and occasionally typing parts of form letters that were sent to SRF members to whom weekly printed lessons were mailed. Evenings and weekends provided opportunities for private study and reflection. On some

Saturday mornings, a few of the monks gathered for informal sessions of devotional chanting and meditation.

I also worked at the newly acquired Lake Shrine in Pacific Palisades that was being landscaped and prepared for a public dedication later that summer. Surrounding a small lake are shrines honoring major world religions and private areas for meditation. White towers, with golden lotus domes, serve as a central focus.

Land was purchased above the Lake Shrine for SRF by Mr. Lynn during the early stages of planning because Master wanted to maintain the privacy of the shrine. A beautiful temple was constructed on that site in 1996.

At SRF headquarters, Master occasionally walked for exercise and to make suggestions regarding maintenance and improvements of the grounds and buildings. He also talked with disciples whom he encountered. During one of my random meetings with him, he said, "Be patient, Roy. I have plans for you."

Late one evening, I was walking by the driveway near the main building with a brother disciple. We met Master, who was out for a stroll. After a few minutes of general conversation, he handed his cane to me and his hat to the other disciple, and inhaled and exhaled deeply a few times while tensing and relaxing the muscles of his upper body. Recovering his cane and hat, he said, "See! No matter how busy I am, I always do my exercises."

Someone had given the monks a table-tennis set that was temporarily put near their basement dining room. I came out of the dining room one evening as Master came into the hallway. Seeing the table-tennis table, he motioned for me to pick up a paddle. As we were gently hitting the ball back and forth a few times, a gleam came into his eye and he suddenly sent it past me with a fast, forceful stroke of his paddle. As he got into the elevator, he paused, turned toward me, and quietly said, "You have a wonderful future, Roy."

During another evening, when Master came into the lower

hallway and saw me and three other monks, he invited himself into the men's dining room and asked for something to eat. A bowl of corn flakes with milk was prepared for him. As he was eating his light snack, he saw a small bottle of hot sauce on a cabinet shelf and asked for it. After pouring some of the hot sauce into his spoon, he tasted it, and smiled. He then said, "Line up, boys," and happily measured out a small portion for each of us while telling us that we could, with practice, learn to withdraw our attention from the senses and not feel any discomfort.

On January 5, Master's birthday, the resident disciples at SRF headquarters gathered in the evening to meditate with him in the chapel, after which a banquet was enjoyed by everyone. On such occasions he praised the dedication of the disciples who were supportive of his endeavors and were consistent in their spiritual practices. In the course of his talk he said, "Among those who are here tonight, many will be jivanmuktas and some will be siddhas."

A *jivanmukta* is soul- (*jiva*) free (*mukta*), Self-realized, with some subliminal tendencies (karmic conditions) yet to be eliminated. *Siddhas* (perfected, accomplished) yogis are fully liberated from all conditions that formerly blurred and confined their consciousness.

During the first two months that I was with Master, I became increasingly aware of a deeper relationship that was being established between us. Although he had not yet formally accepted me as a disciple, he related to me as he did to his disciples. I experienced direct transmission of knowledge from him, and was sometimes able to intuit his thoughts and anticipate his comments before he spoke them to me or to others. When I discerned his unspoken thoughts, he would glance at me with a knowing smile. When I was not physically with him, I was often mentally and spiritually attuned to his mind and consciousness and "felt" his presence.

Dynamic energy movements occurred in my body within a

few weeks after I met Master. Unexpected surges of life force would quickly ascend the spinal pathway, then subside. When I sat to meditate, the flows became more pronounced. If I was not relaxed when the process occurred, my body would sometimes be pulled upright. A brother disciple noticed these occasional movements and asked about them. When I described the sensations he smiled. "That is occurring because you are seeing Master frequently," he explained, "and because you are in this environment."

When a receptive disciple has a personal relationship with a spiritually awake guru, dormant forces are aroused within the disciple to the degree that one is receptive. This can occur spontaneously or the guru may transmit a flow of force by intention. By experimenting, I discovered that when I was relaxed during meditation, the energy surges would flow freely without causing a physical reaction. Instead, a mild ecstasy was experienced.

A few days after my arrival at SRF headquarters, an older disciple became ill. I was asked to take his meals to his room. He had said to another disciple, "I have great respect for Master, but I don't have the faith that you boys seem to have. I wish I did."

When his condition did not improve, he was taken to a hospital. Master went to see him and returned at a late hour. I was at the lower entrance of the main building with a few monks when he arrived. He told us, "I asked him, 'Do you want to live? If you do, tell me right now and I will heal you.' He said, 'No, sir.' He has lost his will to live and I couldn't help him. If he had said 'Yes' I could have healed him and he would have had a few more years to make spiritual progress. It was sad to see him like that."

Late one evening, Master talked privately with me in his small, two-room apartment on the top floor of the headquarters building. As he blessed me, and assured me that he would talk with me from time to time, he took a banana from a nearby bowl of fruit and gave it to me. In the men's dormitory a few minutes later, sitting on my bed, reflecting on my good fortune to have

Master as my guru, I slowly ate the banana, including the peel because I did not want to deprive myself of any blessings that flowed from his hands.

A new building, with a vegetarian restaurant on the street level and a fellowship hall below it, was then being built beside the Hollywood temple. When the concrete walls were being installed, all of the monks were assigned to the project. Bernard Cole, a senior SRF minister came late in the afternoon to examine the work in progress. Seeing me, he said, "Master wants to see you tonight. Be in the basement hallway near the elevator at seven o'clock."

That evening, I waited a little more than three hours. Thinking that Master had been detained because of other, more important matters, I went to the dormitory and slept.

"Where were you last night?" The unexpected inquiry was directed to me by one of the younger monks. "Master had to go out last night and got back late. He asked me 'Where's Roy?' When I offered to find you, he said that he would see you later."

That afternoon, Bernard informed me, "Master wants to see you tonight at seven o'clock, where you were last night."

At 9 p.m. that evening, after I had patiently waited for almost two hours, Master's car was brought to the entrance of the building and luggage was put into its trunk. Word spread that he was going to his retreat house in Twenty Nine Palms, about a three hour drive east of Los Angeles, and would probably be there for several months.

Thirty or more disciples lined the hallway to bid their guru a fond farewell. Before long, someone announced that Master was talking on the telephone and would not depart until the next day. His car was returned to the garage, the gathering of disciples dispersed, and I was again alone, this time firmly resolved to remain there throughout the night, if necessary. I did not have to wait long.

I heard the elevator descend. As the door opened, Master,

smiled and exclaimed, "There's my boy!"

"Come with me," he invited, as he walked towards Bernard's nearby room.

Master, dressed to go for a walk, was nibbling from a handful of almonds. Catching my eye, he remarked, "This is the only food I've eaten today."

Asking me to kneel before him, he took my right hand in his. In a gentle, paternal tone of voice, he said, "Years ago, when Sri Yukteswar accepted me as a disciple, he told me, 'I pledge to you my unconditional love. No matter what you do, or fail to do, I will love you forever.' " Then, firmly grasping my hand, he said, "Roy, I pledge to you my unconditional love. Can you pledge the same love to me?"

"Yes, sir," I assured him.

When I stood up, he inquired, "Will you do as I ask?"

My response was immediately affirmative.

"I want you to go to Phoenix. We have a new project there. The climate will be good for your health, too. Bernard will take you to the train station in the morning."

He told me to write to him frequently and to visit him every two months.

Part of Chapter Three: Observations and Reflections of a Disciple

In Phoenix, I was met by Herbert Freed, the minister of the SRF Center which had been dedicated by Master in the late 1940s. Located at 1800 West Monroe Street, two blocks from the State Capitol, the one-story house had four modest rooms and a chapel in which Sunday evening and midweek services were conducted.

Bernard's mother was visiting the Center for a few days and had prepared a light meal. At the kitchen table, Herbert told me about the "new project"—a goat dairy.

The Rosebud Goat Dairy, approximately three miles from Scottsdale, Arizona, then a one-stoplight village, had been funded by Mr. Lynn. On the five-acre site was a small house, one barn,

and a herd of twenty goats. A few weeks after my arrival, three adobe brick barns were built and, to increase milk production, eighty goats were purchased from a California dairy.

I arranged a small altar in a corner of my private room. Before dawn and late at night, I sat in front of the altar and meditated. I used the techniques that I had learned and applied the helpful advice that Master had given to me and which had I heard him give to others. My meditations became more consistently satisfying, and I devoted three hours a day to practice.

Many interesting meditative perceptions occurred. One night, after an hour or more of concentration, I became aware of myself as a point of consciousness located near the second chakra in the lower spinal pathway. I saw my body's internal organs, circulatory system, muscles, bones, nervous system, and brain illumined by radiant, white light and was able to observe with detached interest. After a while, I felt myself becoming enlarged until I was again identified with my physical body.

I frequently saw visions of what seemed to be astral realms; Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Sri Yukteswar, Master, and other luminous beings unknown to me sometimes momentarily appeared in my spiritual eye. At times, my consciousness seemed to be so expanded that it included the cosmos. Some of these interesting perceptions could have been mind-brain produced phenomena.

Master had counseled me earlier, "Stay in tune with me and I will be able to help you. When you are restless or have doubts, it causes static in your mental radio that makes it more difficult for me to help you. So stay in tune with me."

While talking with a small group of disciples, he said, "When you are in tune with me, you can be in tune with God." We understood that he was telling us that, because he was always God-conscious, by attunement with him, we could become somewhat aware of the reality of God.

During my first year of discipleship, occasional moods dis-

radiance

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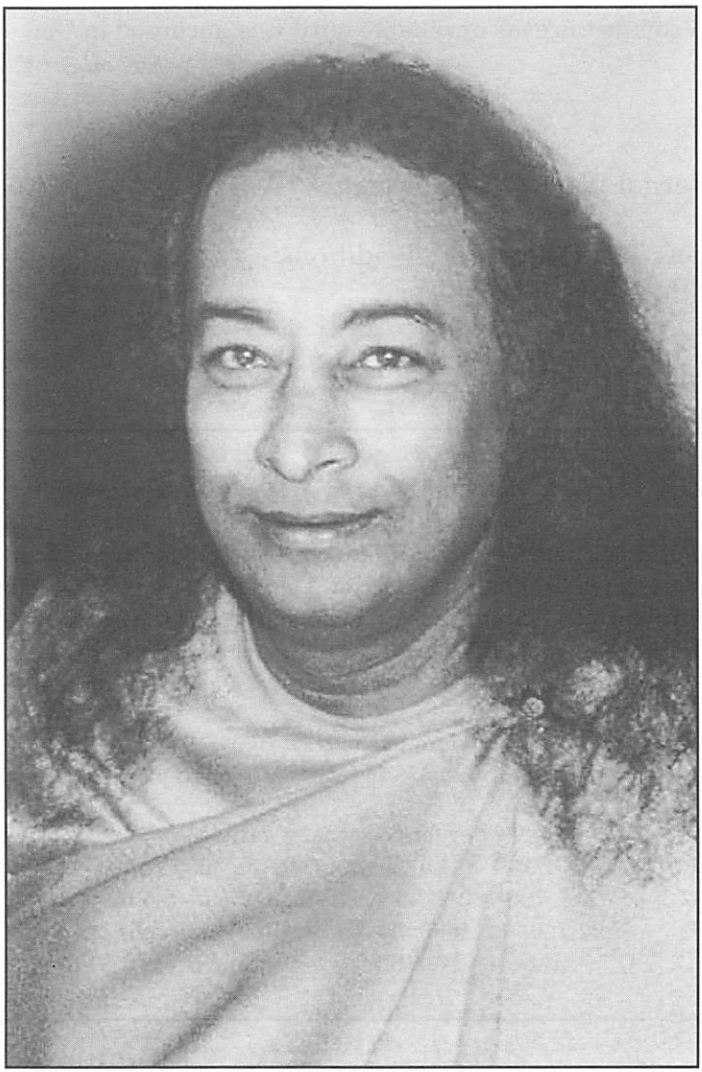

Paramahansa Yogananda, circa 1951

Of all who aspire to higher knowledge, the wisdom-impelled devotee who is steadfastly devoted to God-realization is exceptional. That devotee's devotion increasingly attracts the redemptive influences of grace. – *Bhagavad Gita 7:17*

One supreme Self is the ultimate Reality. It is the source of everything. The soul is immortal. God's attributes permeate it. Let your spiritual path be that of God-communion. – *Lahiri Mahasaya*

Human conduct is ever unreliable until it is anchored in God.
– *Swami Sri Yukteswar*

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Self-Knowledge

A commentary on Adi (the first) Shankara's 68-verse treatise on nondualism. Born in the eighth century, in south India, Shankara studied the Vedas and entered into the monastic life at an early age. After devoting himself to yogic practices and meditation, he wrote commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita and other scriptures, traveled throughout India to debate renowned philosophers, and established four monastic centers of learning in the south, east, west, and north of India. He also reformed the renunciate order of swamis. He left his body during his thirty-second year.

Nondualism means that only one ultimate Reality exists as a whole—not divided into separate parts; the universe and all that is in it is projected by supreme Consciousness. When Shankara asserts that the world is not real, what is meant is that it has no independent existence; it is produced by interactions of cosmic forces projected from the permanent field of Reality. People who do not know this may mistakenly think that the physical realm is an illusion.

1. I am composing this treatise on Self-Knowledge to serve the needs of those who have been purified by the practice of austerities and who are peaceful in heart, free from cravings, and desirous of liberation.

In this verse the author declares that his words are not for people who, because their awareness is ordinary (modified or blurred), will not comprehend it. It is for those whose disciplined behaviors have prepared them to be receptive to it and sincerely aspire to complete liberation of consciousness.

2. As fire is the direct cause of cooking, so knowledge, and not any other form of discipline, is the direct cause of liberation; for liberation cannot be accomplished without knowledge.

Physical and mental disciplines, and effective meditation practices, calm the mind and greatly improve our powers of

discriminative intelligence and intuition. The knowledge that prevails when our pure-conscious essence of being is directly realized makes liberation of consciousness possible.

3. Actions cannot destroy ignorance. Knowledge alone removes ignorance, as light dispels darkness.

Disciplined actions (kriyas) nurture physical well-being, refine the nervous system, calm the mind, and purify the intellect, allowing Self-knowledge to be unveiled.

4. It is only because of ignorance that the Self appears to be finite. When ignorance is banished, the Self, which does not admit to any multiplicity, truly reveals itself by itself, like the sun [is revealed] when a cloud is removed.

Imperfect perception of one's real nature is the primary cause of restricting conditions, whether they are dormant, weak, aroused, or not freely expressive. – *Patanjali's yoga-sutras 2:4*

Kriya yoga (disciplined thinking and behavior, profound Self-examination, and letting go of the mistaken sense of self) removes the obstacles to Self-knowing.

5. By repeated practice, knowledge purifies the embodied soul stained by ignorance, and then itself disappears, as a cleansing agent disappears after the water has been purified.

Frequent, repeated practice of superconscious meditation to the stage of Self-knowing purifies our mind and awareness. In the early stages of practice, Self-knowing may briefly occur, then be followed by a return to ordinary states of awareness. The final stage is realized when Self-realization is constant and we are established in existence-being.

6. The world, filled with attachments and aversions, and the rest [the variety of possible mental and emotional states which are common to the human condition] is like a dream: it appears to be real as long as

one is ignorant, but is perceived as unreal when one is awake.

In the absence of Self-knowledge, powers of perceptions are flawed, illusions are common, causes of events and circumstances are unknown, and what occurs may be thought of as having independent existence. Paramahansa Yogananda often reminded his disciples to discern the changeless Reality that exists behind the drama of ordinary life. He said that life, as most people see and experience it, is like a motion picture show composed of lights and shadows.

7. The world appears to be real as long as the nondual Supreme Reality, which is the basis of all [things], is not known. It is like the illusion of silver in an oyster shell.

Things, events, and circumstances in the mundane realm come into manifestation and eventually disappear. They exist, but they are not real in the sense of being permanent. That is why devotees on a spiritual path are advised to avoid strong attachments to externals and to rely on the invisible Source of everything for their security and well-being.

8. All the various forms exist in the imagination of the perceiver, the substratum being the eternal and all-pervading Reality which is existence and intelligence. Names and forms are like bangles and bracelets, the eternal reality is like gold.

Knowing that what is observed in the mundane realm is insubstantial does not mean that we should be irresponsible or impractical in relationship to the world. Our duties are to be skillfully performed, relationships are to be nurtured, and our environment is to be cared for—while we are awakening to pure Self-knowing that liberates our consciousness.

9. As the all-pervading space appears to be diverse because of its association with restricting conditions, which are various, and is perceived as one when the restricting conditions are banished, so om-

nipresent Reality appears to be diverse because of its association with the various restricting conditions and is perceived as one when they are banished.

Conditions which modify our awareness cause and sustain our illusions. When they are removed, renounced, or transcended, our consciousness is restored to its original purity. It is important to remember that, behind the screen of our mind, personality, and false sense of self, we are units of pure consciousness.

10. Because of being associated with restricting conditions, such ideas as social status, color, and one's role or place in life are superimposed [by us and others] on the one Reality, as flavor, color, and other characteristics are mixed with water.

At the core, every person is a flawless unit of pure consciousness regardless of their physical appearance or the role they play. It is only when we mistakenly identify with an illusional sense of self that there is a possibility of being egocentric, small-minded, or provincial.

11. The physical body, through which the Self experiences pleasure and pain, is determined by past actions and formed out of the five great subtle elements, which become gross when one half of one subtle element joins with one eighth if each of the other four.

Actions result in a variety of experiences and perceptions which impress the subconscious. Subconscious influences can be supportive, debilitating, or have little or no effect. Accumulated subconscious impressions which can cause effects are referred to as karmic impressions which, if troublesome, need to be weakened and neutralized. Constructive thinking and actions, discriminating to know the difference between our true nature and ordinary states of awareness, and frequent practice of superconscious meditation weakens and dissolves troublesome subconscious conditions.

The subtle element-essences of space, air, fire, water, and earth produce their gross material aspects.

12. The subtle body, the instrument of the soul's experience, consists of five pranas, ten organs, the mind, and intelligence—formed from basic elements before their subdivisions and combinations.

An astral body is composed of five aspects of prana (life-force); ten capacities which make possible the senses of smell, sight, touch, hearing, taste, movement in space, manual dexterity, speech, elimination, and reproduction; the mind which is used to process perceptions (think); and the faculty of intelligence which makes discernment of what is true possible. The astral body is formed prior to the formation of the physical body.

13. Ignorance [absence of Self-knowledge] which is indescribable and without beginning, is the primary cause of the restrictions superimposed on the Self. Know for certain that the Self is other than the three bodies that restrict.

Absence of Self-knowledge can be inferred by observing its effects and indicated by saying what it is not. It cannot be described, or its origin known, because neither the mind nor the intellect, both of which are formed of subtle matter, can fully grasp that which is not matter. For individualized units of pure consciousness (souls), veiling of Self-knowledge occurs when they identify with primordial nature prior to becoming involved with causal, astral, and physical realms. The three bodies that (may) restrict or modify an unenlightened soul's awareness are the causal body made of electric and magnetic forces and the astral and physical bodies.

14. Because of the union of the five sheaths [through which an incarnated Self expresses], the Self appears to be like them.

The five coverings of an embodied soul are described as the bliss sheath that enables the embodied soul to be aware of its

pure essence; the prana sheath composed of vital forces; the faculty of intellect; the mind; and the physical body. The soul does not become united with them, it only identifies with, and expresses through, them.

15. One should, by discrimination, separate the pure, inmost Self from the sheaths by which it is covered, as one separates a kernel of rice from the covering husk by striking it with a pestle.

The five coverings of our changeless essence are material substances; thus, objects to be observed as other than what we are. By discerning that we are pure-conscious beings, we can be detached from what we are not. Self-knowledge that frees us from all illusions can then prevail.

Discrimination of what is true can result from affirming what we are not, or what we are. We can declare, "I am not an ego, intellect, mind, or causal, astral, or physical body." Or we can acknowledge, "I am pure consciousness, a flawless unit of supreme, pure Consciousness."

16. Though all-pervading, the Self does not shine in everything; it is manifest only in the faculty of intelligence, like a reflection in clear water or a clean mirror.

Just as supreme Consciousness pervades all realms that it projects and sustains, so we pervade our intellect, mind, and causal, astral, and physical bodies. While we are embodied, our intellect, when pure and transparent, can reflect the luminosity of our essence of being. An individualized unit of pure consciousness is referred to as a Self—what one truly is. Its reflection in the faculty of intellect is referred to as a soul. So long as we identify with the reflection of what we are, we are not yet Self-realized or liberated.

17. Realize the Self to be distinct from the body, sense organs, mind, intellect, and the myriad aspects of Nature—as the witness of their

functions, as a king views his kingdom.

Self-knowledge can be acquired by improving our powers of discrimination, by intuitive discernment, and by meditation that is frequently practiced until superconsciousness is constant.

18. As the moon appears to be moving when clouds move in the sky, so to those who do not discriminate, the Self appears to be active when in reality the senses are active.

Our essence of being is changeless; the witness of what is experienced or observed. When we are identified with mental, emotional, and physical states, we may be inclined to think that we are other than what we are as spiritual beings.

19. The body, senses, mind, and faculty of intelligence engage in their respective actions because of consciousness which is inherent in the Self, just as individuals work with the help of the light that is inherent in the sun.

Our body, sense organs, mind, and faculty of intelligence function because our consciousness pervades and empowers them. We are, therefore, superior to them, as supreme Consciousness is superior to all that it manifests from itself.

20. Because of lack of discrimination, those who do not have Self-knowledge superimpose on the stainless Self, which is absolute [pure] consciousness-existence, the characteristics and functions of the body and senses, just as people mistakenly attribute a blue color to the sky.

The significance of this verse is self-evident.

Send your questions, inquiries, or comments for possible use in our future dialogue interactions by regular mail or e-mail:
csainc@csa-davis.org

I have been studying truth principles and regularly practicing meditation for fifteen years. Although my intellectual grasp of philosophical concepts has improved, I have not yet had any exceptional meditative perceptions.

Spiritual awakening is not the same for everyone. Some people have exceptional meditative perceptions, while others experience improvement of their powers of intellectual and intuitive discernment. Meditation practice that does not result in dramatic perceptions but does produce mental calmness is of value because it purifies the mind and intellect, and allows intuition to function more effectively. Some meditators who have (or claim to have) interesting subjective perceptions are not always intellectually competent or able to live effectively.

One of my problems is apathy: disinterest in matters that seem to be important to others whom I know. I am not enthusiastic about doing anything.

It is not necessary for you to be interested in matters that appeal to others. You should be interested in cultivating your spiritual awareness and learning how to skillfully relate to the processes of life. Analyze your thoughts and feelings. Why are you apathetic? Discover the cause and remove it. Are you tired, confused, or purposeless? Overcome apathy by deciding to perform constructive, useful actions. Establish, and adhere to a regular schedule of metaphysical study and meditation practice. Let your thoughts and actions reflect your intention to have a mean-

ingful existence. Consider being in this world as an adventure. How much can you learn? How spiritually awake can you be? How much good can you do? How can you be a positive influence in the world? Be curious. Enlarge your capacity to acquire useful knowledge. Avoid concern about what others do, or don't do. Do what you know is best for you to do without ego-motivation or any need for recognition or approval. For physical and psychological well-being, adhere to wholesome lifestyle regimens.

Affirm (Forthrightly Declare)

Knowing that I am an immortal, spiritual being,
I am alert, energetic, and calmly enthusiastic in
my resolve to actualize my full potential to quickly
awaken to Self- and God-realization.

Speak this affirmation aloud a few times, with conviction.
Speak it quietly a few times.
Speak it mentally a few times.
Conform your thoughts and actions to your firm resolve.

I enjoy practicing kriya pranayama and other meditation techniques. I do not always experience a calm mental state. What can I do to quiet my mind and settle my emotions?

After practicing a meditation technique, put your attention and awareness in the crown chakra and patiently sit, waiting and observing. Be there. Stay alert. If you frequently do this, and sit long enough, you will have satisfying results.

Avoid anxiety about the results of meditation practice. Get your egocentric sense of self out of the way and let your true nature emerge. At the core of your being, you are already that which you aspire to consciously know. Identify with your pure essence. Doing this will increase sattwic influences that will calm your mind and purify your intellect.

When I pray to the gurus for guidance, can I expect to receive a telepathic response from them? Are they actually conscious of my prayers and needs?

Your concept of a guru or saint can be a point of contact with a larger Reality. Any seeming telepathic response, if it occurs, emerges from within your own mind, and should be examined to determine its usefulness. We should not imagine that disembodied gurus and saints are blissfully abiding in subtle realms with nothing more useful to do than to think about us and respond to our entreaties.

Many people erroneously presume that their everyday circumstances are of interest to gurus and saints. Those who are already spiritually enlightened, whether in this realm or not, are primarily interested in the spiritual well-being of others rather than with their ordinary self-created problems.

How can I maintain an interest in everyday events and relationships while also cultivating detachment?

Be aware of your true nature in relationship with the Infinite as you attend to your duties and interact with others. You can be as Self-realized in this world as you can be in any other realm. Living here with insight is the best preparation for all of your future relationships with events and circumstances in space-time. Until you awaken completely from involvements with objective phenomena you will be somewhere in a gross or subtle realm in the universe.

I have a mental concept of my true nature. How can I move on to actual Self-knowing—and know that I know?

Continue to aspire to experience your real nature. Believe that you can awaken to it. A common obstacle to doing this is conscious or unconscious attachment to the ordinary sense of self. Observe your thoughts and feelings. Are you inclined to think

and feel that you are a human being hoping to be spiritually awake, or a spiritual being for whom such awakening can occur naturally and easily?

I sincerely desire to be Self- and God-realized. What should I do?

Do everything you know (and learn) to do to allow Self- and God-realization to be actualized. Remove all obstacles to that realization by disciplined thinking and behavior, analysis of your real nature, and cultivation of superconsciousness.

Note: Read Patanjali's yoga-sutras with my commentary in *The Science of Self-Realization* and *Seven Lessons in Conscious Living* to improve your understanding of kriya yoga practices.

Why do some people quickly understand these teachings while others do not?

Complete knowledge of Consciousness and its processes is within every person. It is Self-revealed as one becomes more spiritually awake. Ability to comprehend is determined by one's intellectual capacity and powers of intuition, which can be improved with practice.

Some people quickly comprehend these teachings and are strongly self-motivated to apply them. Others who comprehend them may not be motivated to apply them. Sincere truth seekers who learn slowly may be resolved to patiently persist in their endeavors and to apply what they learn. For truth seekers whose powers of comprehension and not yet developed, adherence to spiritual practices will still be helpful.

The various systems of yoga evolved to serve the needs of truth seekers according to their ability to learn and practice.

Explain more about the guru-disciple relationship. I feel that I am ready to have it, but am not sure what will be expected of me or what I should do.

The most important matters are attraction to the kriya yoga tradition and willingness to be committed to learning and practice. All that will be expected of you is that you do your best to adhere to the teaching guidelines and to persist with your studies and meditation practices.

The guru-disciple relationship should be considered as a permanent, meaningful relationship that will culminate in the disciple's Self-realization and liberation of consciousness.

Some disciples err by mistakenly presuming that a guru's instructions are only recommendations or suggestions which may be disregarded or modified. The guru's primary purpose in working with disciples is to assist and encourage them to discern the difference between their true nature and ordinary states of consciousness and to awaken to Self-knowing.

When Paramahansa Yogananda accepted an individual as a disciple he would emphasize the importance of their having a close relationship. After pledging his unconditional love to me, he asked if I could pledge my unconditional love to him, which I readily did. To some other disciples he said, "Promise me that you will never try to avoid me."

Discipleship is easy for a person whose dedication to the spiritual path is firmly resolved. It can be difficult if one is not thus dedicated or if superficial or nonessential matters are allowed to distract one from intensive (concentrated) spiritual practice. The value of discipleship is better understood as the disciple's spiritual growth unfolds through the years.

To learn more about the guru-disciple relationship, read my recent book, *Paramhansa Yogananda As I Knew Him.*

To define yourself in terms of human limitations is to desecrate the image of God which you are. – *Paramahansa Yogananda*

News and Service Projects

Paramahansa Yogananda As I Knew Him was published in June and is being widely distributed. If you do not yet have a copy, order it now from the CSA office. Tell your spiritually inclined friends and kriya yoga initiates about this book. Also, request a quantity of printed order forms to give to individuals who will appreciate your thoughtfulness.

Advance Notice of Our New York City Meditation Seminar
A meditation seminar in the kriya yoga tradition is scheduled in New York City, Saturday, October 29. In the main ballroom of Holiday Inn, 440 West 57th Street. This location, where I presented a meditation seminar in 2001, is convenient and comfortable. When you receive printed publicity about this event, in September, request quantities of seminar brochures to put in book and health food stores and at other places where they will be seen by persons who may want to attend.

Egoism arises only in the absence of investigation of truth. When one inquires into the idea of ego, it ceases to exist. There is then pure infinite Consciousness. Desireless, free from delusion, remain established in Self-knowledge. – *Yoga Vasistha (circa 900 – 1300 C.E.)*

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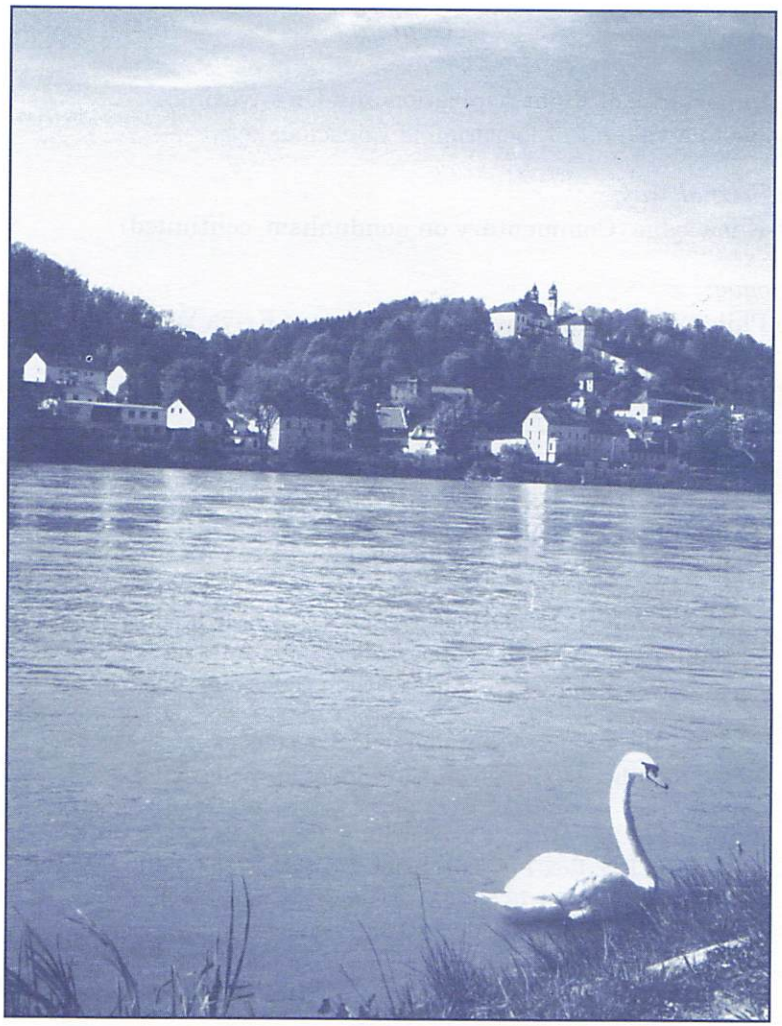

For dedicated practitioners of yoga [samadhi] who have discarded cravings and anger, whose thoughts and mental states are mastered and are established in Self-knowledge, their happiness of Self-realization is undiminished. – *Bhagavad Gita 6:26*

Devotees who know the reality of God easily renounce attachments and aversions, are self-disciplined, can meditate with concentrated attention, and merge their consciousness in God. – *Sri Yukteswar*

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Prologue

The Importance of Right Aspiration and Unwavering Resolve to Awaken to Liberation of Consciousness

Spiritual evolution can be quickened by condensing experiences with concentrated endeavor. – *Paramahansa Yogananda*

To condense something is to compress or make it concise. Thoughts and actions focused on accomplishing a purpose that is of value to us produce desired results in a shorter interval of time.

Do you want to be fully, spiritually awake in your present incarnation? If you do, what are you doing to allow liberation of consciousness to be actualized?

Are your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in accord with your aspiration to have your consciousness liberated from all of the conditions that modify or confine it—or do you let your thoughts and behaviors be determined by moods, nonuseful habits, or external circumstances? Use will power to discipline your mind, feelings, and all of your behaviors.

Do you frequently read metaphysical and inspirational literature to nourish your mind with helpful ideas and improve your understanding of the essence of your being and higher realities? Read Patanjali's yoga-sutras, the Bhagavad Gita, and other kriya yoga-oriented literature. Read *Autobiography of a Yogi* and *Paramahansa Yogananda As I Knew Him* to improve your understanding of the teachings of the gurus of our kriya yoga tradition.

Do you meditate daily until you are superconscious? Real yoga practice is frequent practice of samadhi (bringing together your attention and awareness with your essence of being) rather than passive sitting or allowing your attention to be involved with superficial, subjective perceptions.

From time to time, examine how you are living your life. Write what you know you should do and resolve to do it. Write what you have been doing that is not useful or essential and eliminate or minimize those actions.

How many years remain in your present incarnation? Do what you can to live a long, healthy life while remembering the importance of awakening to Self- and God-realization.

Wake now, wake, Oh my saint
Wake now, wake, Oh my saint
You did not meditate
You did not concentrate
You did not meditate
You did not concentrate
You wasted time in idle talk
You wasted time in idle talk
Wake now, wake, Oh my saint
Wake now, wake, Oh my saint
Death may be at your door
You may not have time anymore
Death may be at your door
You may not have time anymore
To redeem your soul

Chanted by Swami Sri Yukteswar to encourage his disciples to concentrate on their spiritual practices.

Kriya yoga practice should be intensive (concentrated) if optimum results are to be experienced. Right practice includes all that we do to nurture our total well-being and remove and renounce all thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that interfere with the unveiling and quick emergence of our innate, divine capacities and qualities. Many kriya initiates are not conscious enough of the necessity of intensive practice. They inattentively read metaphysical literature, meditate only randomly or passively, are overly involved in meaningless relationships and activities, do not discipline their thoughts, moods, and behaviors, and al-

low ordinary, conditioned states of consciousness to prevail. Thus egocentric, rather than Self-knowing, they are inclined to live like "ordinary" people while (perhaps) mildly hoping to experience spiritual growth. Being spiritually enlightened is not their most important aim in life. If it were, they would behave differently.

When I was with Paramahansa Yogananda, I was always aware of his emphasis on self-disciplined thinking, emotional stability, and attentive study and meditation practice. He often said that *mastery of attention was the key to being successful on the spiritual path.* When our attention is not controlled, we may be inclined to be easily distracted from important matters and to allow thoughts, moods, and behaviors to be influenced by moods and whims.

This kriya yoga path is the direct way to quickly awaken to Self-realization only when we are sincerely resolved to do what is necessary to help ourselves. If we are not dedicated, results will not be forthcoming. This path is easy when we are dedicated to it; it is difficult and unproductive when we allow egocentric inclinations to prevail.

Until we are fully, spiritually awake, the possibilities of progressive or sudden comprehension of higher realities are ever-present and can make the rightly resolved, spiritual life an uninterrupted adventure of worthwhile discovery.

There is a subtle bond between the soul and the senses. The mind is the connecting link between them. Divine perceptions are had when the senses are spiritualized. Joy, sweetness, and exultation fill the entire being when the sense faculties are purified by the purity of the soul. The body is the holy temple. God as the indwelling soul is the deity. One who is enlightened knows this. – *Lahiri Mahasaya*

Self-Knowledge

21. As the movement of water may be mistakenly attributed to the moon reflected in it, so the actions and various feelings one has, which belong to the mind, may be falsely attributed to the Self.

A truth student should discern the difference between what is observed or experienced and what one is.

22. Attachments, desire, pleasure, pain, and other characteristics are perceived to exist so long as the mind is active. They are not perceived in deep sleep. They belong to the mind, not to the Self.

During deep sleep (and during transcendent superconscious states) our awareness is withdrawn from the mind and the senses.

23. The permanent nature of the Self is eternality, purity, reality, consciousness, and bliss, just as luminosity is the nature of the sun, coolness of water, and heat of fire.

The permanent characteristics of a Self have only to be realized by restoring awareness to its original wholeness. Self-realization is not an attainment; it is merely a return to Self-knowing.

24. The notion that "I know" is produced by the union of the mind with two aspects of the Self: existence and consciousness.

When we are identified with the mind, a sense of "I know what I am or I know something" exists. Self-knowing or direct knowing of something does not require the use of one's mind.

25. The Self never changes and the faculty of intelligence is never endowed with consciousness. A person lacking discernment is inclined to believe that the Self is the same as the faculty of intelligence and mistakenly presumes that the intellect is the seer and the knower.

The faculty of intellect enables us to discriminate between what is true and what is not true. When we are Self-knowing, what we observe can be directly known without the use of the intellect.

26. The Self that mistakenly presumes itself to be a deluded being may be overwhelmed by fear, like a person who mistakenly thinks that a rope is a snake. The Self regains fearlessness by realizing that it is not a deluded being but the Supreme Self.

The primary cause of illusions (mistaken perception) of what is observed is inability to flawlessly perceive. Nothing external to us (including thoughts, memories, and emotions) can disturb us when we are established in Self-knowing and perceptions are accurate.

27. The mind and sense organs are illumined by the Self alone, as a bottle may be illumined by a lamp. Material things cannot illumine themselves.

The intellect, mind, sense organs, and body are enlivened by the Self. When the life and consciousness of the Self is withdrawn, they cease to function.

28. As a lamp does not need another lamp to radiate its light, so the Self, being consciousness, does not need another instrument of consciousness to illumine itself.

29. By negating all of the restricting characteristics with the help of the scriptural statement "It is not that; it is not that," realize the oneness of the Self and the Supreme Self.

The two ways to restore our consciousness to wholeness are 1) to acknowledge what is true; 2) to acknowledge what is not true. In the latter instance, when all that is not true is discarded, what is true is realized (experienced and known).

30. The body and its characteristics are perishable. Realize through discrimination that you are stainless pure consciousness, different from what is observed.

Dialogue

The Philosophy, Traditions, and Practices of Kriya Yoga

Send your questions, inquiries, or comments for possible use in our future dialogue interactions. By regular mail or e-mail: csainc@csa-davis.org

What are the requirements for a person to be ordained by you as a representative of this kriya yoga tradition? What are the guidelines for ministers you ordain?

Those whom I ordain are disciples I have known for a few years, whose spiritual practices are intensive, and are willing to serve as representatives of our tradition.

Willingness to continue to learn and to serve rather than a pesonality-centered desire to be a teacher is important. There must respect for me as their spiritual teacher (guru), respect for our lineage of gurus, and willing conformance to our ministry guidelines. Some of the guidelines are to:

- Maintain a close, personal relationship with me and contact me whenever guidance or information is needed.
- Be an active member of Center for Spiritual Awareness and support its ministry services.
- Regularly attend our meditation retreats and seminars.
- Read *Seven Lessons in Conscious Living*, *The Science of Self-Realization*, *The Eternal Way*, my other writings, and *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramahansa Yogananda.
- Sincerely endeavor to actualize the guidelines for personal conduct described in chapter two of Patanjali's yoga-sutras: live harmlessly; be honest and truthful; avoid dissipation of vital forces; avoid strong attachments of all kinds; nurture pure thoughts and behaviors; cultivate peace of mind and inner contentment in all circumstances; be self-disciplined; study metaphysical (higher) realities; renounce egocentric be-

Radiance Dialogue Participation

Questions and inquries about the philosophy, traditions, & practices of kriya yoga for possible use in the next issue.

liefs and behaviors.
- Adhere to holistic regimens of self-care for their health and well-being and meditate on a regular schedule.
- Attend to personal duties and fulfill obligations skillfully and appropriately.
- Thoughtfully and compassionately relate to others.

Some of our ministers are authorized by me to conduct kriya yoga initiations either on my behalf or as teachers who work directly with their students (disciples). When initiating others, ministers are advised to remember that they are representing me and our lineage of gurus. The transmission of instruction and flows of blessings can then be pure and be of benefit for the new initiates.

All of our ministers may perform marriage services, child baptisms, and funeral or memorial services. I am preparing a Service Manual that will be given to our ministers.

Ministers who have web sites should include a link to www.csa-davis.org and refer their contacts to it.

Some of our ministers conduct weekly meditation classes, and/or present a series of classes from time to time. Some of them present occasional classes for other organizations. A few of them have full-time, active teaching centers. Others prefer to only interact with receptive individuals.

Do you advocate a vegan diet (no dairy products or eggs)? Did Paramahansa Yogananda ever recommend this kind of diet? I am a vegetarian and sometimes think that I should avoid dairy products and eggs because of mistreatment of animals by commercial companies.

Such a diet is suitable if one is not comfortable with the thought of supporting companies that mistreat cows and chickens or is not certain that the products are pure. Antibiotics and hormones are often given to cows and to chickens. When I was with my guru, in the early 1950s, disciples were permitted to

drink milk and eat eggs, in moderation.

I read that kriya yoga pranayama is the same as the "cobra's breath" in Coptic teachings.

In Los Angeles, in the 1930s, a man who taught what he said were Coptic teachings learned kriya yoga methods from Paramahansa Yogananda and later told his students that he had learned them in Egypt.

How is a truth student to deal with evil people? All life is an expression of the one Life. We exterminate harmful bacteria and insects. Does harmlessness include these as well as some human beings who are evil?

We have a responsibility to preserve our health and well-being. When it is necessary to exterminate harmful bacteria or insects, or to defend ourselves, appropriate actions can be implemented without having feelings of strong dislike or feeling good about what must be done.

One of my brother disciples who enlisted in the Marine Corps was sent to Korea (early 1950s). Paramahansa Yogananda said to him, "Military service was your choice. You now have to do your duty. But you don't have to enjoy it."

Regarding information in your book Paramahansa Yogananda As I Knew Him. *How did you know he was your true teacher? How did your parents feel about your leaving home at a young age and going so far away? Was it difficult to adapt to the new environment (in Los Angeles) after having grown up in a farm community?*

My intuitive conviction that Paramahansa Yogananda was my guru was confirmed when I met him during the Christmas season in 1949. My mother had died six months before I went to California. Although my father was reluctant to have me leave

home, he understood my need to do so. Traveling from Ohio to Florida and onward to California was an interesting adventure. In Los Angeles, at the Self-Realization Fellowship headquarters, I was introduced to a much larger world than I had previously experienced, and was comfortable in that new environment.

In one of your writings you mentioned the subtle channels in the sushumna channel in the spine. Explain more about them. If soul force enters the body through the medulla oblongata, how can vital forces stored in the base chakra originate in the crown chakra?

According to yogic teachings, causal (electromagnetic) and astral (life force) sheaths pervade the physical body. Within the spinal pathway (sushumna nadi, "the radiant path") are three channels: an astral channel, causal channel, and a fine channel referred to as Brahma nadi (the pathway to God). Moving attention and life force through the sushumna with kriya pranayama practice takes our consciousness into these subtle channels and refines our awareness.

Our life force is said to flow into the body at the medulla center and into the brain, then down the spine. The portion of dormant life force stored in the lower chakras is referred to as kundalini (coiled, dormant potential). As it awakens and becomes influential, our awareness expands and our mental and intellectual powers are enhanced. Dormant life force in the lower chakras naturally becomes aroused and influential in the course of time. It can be encouraged to awaken by cultivating devotion, nurturing mental calmness and emotional stability, aspiration to be spiritually conscious, having the companionship of spiritually awake people, and being in a sacred (spiritually elevating) environment.

Our innate urge to be spiritually awake, if allowed to be influential, spontaneously arouses our life forces and attracts supportive circumstances that enable us to know and to fulfill our

spiritual destiny (be fully conscious of our true nature).

Define the Sanskrit words vasana *and* samskara.

Vasanas are subliminal (below the threshold of conscious awareness) residues of the *samskaras* (mental impressions) of desires or urges that cause mental restlessness and emotional unrest. When they are dormant (or removed) the mind is calm and awareness is clear. Vasanas can be troublesome or they can be constructive. Troublesome influences can be resisted, weakened, and eliminated by cultivating constructive mental states and by frequent practice of superconscious meditation.

My meditations are not always satisfying. I sometimes easily experience what seems to be a pure-conscious state. At other times, my thoughts and emotions dominate my awareness and make it difficult for me to concentrate my attention.

When sitting to meditate, remember why you are doing it. The aim should be to calm your mind and transcend thoughts and emotions. Pray to invoke (invite) a sense of the presence of God and the gurus. If meditation flows naturally, let it happen. If it does not flow naturally, practice kriya yoga pranayamas, then silently sit. When your attention wanders or you notice that you are passive or inattentive, refresh your practice by using a supplemental meditation technique. Keep your attention and awareness in the spiritual eye and crown chakra. In the deep silence, wait and watch. Be observant. Surrender into meditation. Sit until your mind is still and your awareness is clear.

Paramahansa Yogananda advised his disciples to "meditate each day more deeply than they did the day before." While it is unlikely that this will be possible, the aspiration to do it will greatly improve your meditation practice.

To be motivated, think of one of the gurus (or anyone you may have as a spiritual role model) and aspire to experience their state of enlightened consciousness. Gently imagine what

it would be like to be Self- and God-realized. If at first you don't succeed, persist with faith that you can and will be Self- and God-realized.

After meditation practice, constantly aspire to be fully awake. Avoid preoccupation with small-minded concerns and nonuseful activities and personal relationships. Consider everything that you do as spiritual practice. View yourself as a spiritual being, no longer confined by a limited sense of self, false beliefs, subconscious influences, or external conditions. Don't think that you have to struggle to "attain" Self- and God-realization. At the core of your being, you are now Self- and God-knowing. Return your attention to your essence of being.

The erroneous idea that spiritual beings are human beings is an obstacle to Self- and God-knowing. When that false idea is discarded, spiritual awakening can be rapid.

In the Bhagavad Gita story, Arjuna is at first despondent because his understanding of higher realities is deficient. At the end of the story, after he has been spiritually educated, with his doubts removed and no longer confused, he is eager and willing to perform his duties.

When you understand what you are as a spiritual being and what your relationship with God and the universe is, you will be awake to what is true. To be enlightened is to know.

I was recently initiated into kriya yoga practices. Many of the philosophical concepts that I read about are new to me and not always easily understood. I have conflicts about knowing what I should do.

Your understanding will improve. Your ability do what is best for you to do will also improve with practice. Be patient and persistent. You will have positive results. Your progress will sometimes be slow; at other times it will be so quick that it will often pleasantly surprise you.

I sometimes feel regret because, until now, it seems to me that I have wasted most of my life in useless endeavors.

Be thankful that you have made a new beginning that will enable you to wisely move forward with firm resolve. Not all of your past endeavors have been wasted; much of what you experienced is of value and has brought you to where you are now. Make the most of your opportunity to unfold your innate powers and accomplish what you consider to be worthwhile.

News, Service Opportunities, and Special Events

If you have not yet read *Paramahansa Yogananda As I Knew Him*, do so as soon as possible. Tell your spiritually inclined friends about this book.

2006 First International
Kriya Yoga Congress and Meditation Seminar

Plan now to be at this Congress: a unique opportunity to learn, experience the benefits of spiritual practice, and meet and enjoy the friendship of many kriya initiates and some of our ministers who represent our kriya yoga tradition.

The purpose of human life is not what most people imagine it to be.
– *Paramahansa Yogananda*

Many people mistakenly think they are here to their satisfy their sensory urges and emotional and physical needs. The real purpose for our sojourn in this world is to nurture our spiritual growth until we awaken to Self- and God-realization. Let this knowledge determine your thoughts and actions.

Private Retreats At CSA Headquarters
For CSA Members and Kriya Initiates

2006 Schedule

May 1 – 5 May 8 – 12 May 15 – 19

September 4 – 8 September 11 – 15 September 18 – 22

Limited to 20 participants.
Stay for one, two, or three weeks.

Arrive Saturday or Sunday.
Private, Comfortable Guest House Rooms Provided
Prepare Your Own Vegetarian Meals

- One Hour Meditation at 6 a.m. and 2:45 p.m.
- Class on kriya yoga philosophy and practices at 7 a.m.
- Two hours of light work-service daily (optional).
- Free time for rest, private study, and quiet reflection.
- Donation basis.
- Reservations required.
- Request travel directions if needed.

Center for Spiritual Awareness
P.O. Box 7 Lakemont, GA 30552

Telephone (706) 782-4723 weekdays 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Fax (706) 782-4560 anytime. E-mail csainc@csa-davis.org
Internet web site www.csa-davis.org

Regular summer retreat schedules open to everyone are published in *Truth Journal* and our newsletter.

First International

KRIYA YOGA CONGRESS & MEDITATION SEMINAR

–– San Jose, California ––

2006 • March 9 – 11 • Thursday–Saturday

WITH ROY EUGENE DAVIS

AND OTHER FEATURED PRESENTERS

Sponsored by Center for Spiritual Enlightenment, San Jose, Calif.
and Center for Spiritual Awareness, Lakemont, Georgia

All Welcome Donation Basis Reservations Required

Thursday Evening, March 9

Presentation by Ellen Grace O'Brian, spiritual director of
Center for Spiritual Enlightenment.
Mr. Davis will share some of his experiences, observations,
and reflections as a disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda.

Friday, March 10

Morning: Meditation seminar session with Mr. Davis.
Afternoon: Panel discussion on kriya yoga philosophy
with several Center for Spiritual Awareness ministers.
Evening: Presentation by Samuel Sasu, director of
Center for Spiritual Awareness, West Africa.
And a devotional chanting session.

Saturday, March 11

Morning: Meditation seminar session with Mr. Davis.
Afternoon: Kriya Yoga initiation service.
Evening: Vegetarian banquet.

Early Morning Meditation, Hatha Yoga, and QiGong Sessions

At the DoubleTree Hotel, San Jose. Special Room Rates.

Request a 2006 Kriya Yoga Congress Brochure from:

Center for Spiritual Enlightenment
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not bad now?"

"This pain I've been having now and then," I told him.

"You have pain?" he inquired further.

As I began to try to describe the symptoms he touched my chest with his hand, said: "You'll be all right now," and changed the theme of our conversation. The subject was not mentioned again. Nor did the symptoms ever return.

I had many opportunities to observe the various ways that Master beneficially influenced his disciples. His good manners and behaviors were exemplary. Always well-groomed, his body emanated a pleasant fragrance. To be in his presence was to be uplifted. During the course of a casual conversation, he would say something that would be meaningfully relevant to a person's need at that time.

Meditation Seminars & Kriya Yoga Initiations

Germany (near Munich), April 1 – 3
Contact Harald and Marlies Reiske: info@kriya-yoga.de

Italy (Genova), April 5 – 6
Contact Furio Sclano: fsyukteswarji@yahoo.com
Also see this well-illustrated website: www.guruji.it

London, April 10, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Holiday Inn-Kings Cross/Bloomsbury, 1 Kings Cross Road.
Reservations: contact the CSA office in the U.S.
or in the U.K.: richardfish@tiscali.co.uk

Ghana (Accra), April 15, 16
E-mail Samuel Sasu: healthworksgh@yahoo.com

*Orlando, Florida: Saturday, May 7, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
LaQuinta Inn, 626 Lee Road. (Winter Park Area).
Lee Road Exit off I-4 north Orlando.
Reservations for Orlando: Contact the CSA Office

Private Retreats At CSA Headquarters
For CSA Members and Kriya Initiates

2005 Spring & Autumn Schedules

May 2 – 6 May 9 – 13 May 16 – 20

Sept. 12 – 16 Sept. 19 – 23 Sept. 26 – 30

Limited to 20 participants.
Stay for one, two, or three weeks.

Arrive Saturday or Sunday.
Private, Comfortable Guest House Rooms Provided
Prepare Your Own Vegetarian Meals

- One Hour Meditation at 6 a.m. and 2:45 p.m.
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Regular summer retreat schedules open to everyone are published in *Truth Journal* and our newsletter.

turbed my inner peace as thoughts that liberation of consciousness would not soon occur passed through my mind. During one such temporary episode, Master mailed me a brief, handwritten note: "Dear Roy. You are making yourself unhappy by indulging in moods and playing a negative mental phonograph record in your mind. Why don't you break that record?" His practical words enabled me to discard the self-limiting habit.

I usually visited Master at his desert retreat where two houses were on adjacent lots. He lived and worked in one of the houses; some of his female disciples who typed his letters and transcribed and edited his writings lived in the other house. Male disciples who did the maintenance work slept in a cottage a few miles distant.

During one of my visits to Twenty Nine Palms, while helping an older disciple fasten wire mesh to the wall of the garage to prepare it for plastering, Master walked by and stopped to chat. There was a small swimming pool a few feet from where he stood that had recently been installed for his use. Master asked the other disciple to get a pump from the garage and drain the pool so it could be cleaned.

The seemingly disinterested response was, "I can't do it now, sir. I'm too busy with this job."

Turning to me, Master asked, "Roy, will you empty the pool?" Following his instructions, I found two five-gallon buckets and a short rope in the garage, and proceeded with the project.

Attaching the rope to one bucket, I took water from the pool, poured it into the second bucket, refilled the first one, and carried the water to some nearby shrubs. I soon discovered that a small swimming pool can contain many hundreds of gallons of water. By midafternoon, with sore hands and tired muscles, I was pleased to see that the water level in the pool had been significantly lowered.

The next morning, as I prepared to resume the task, Master came out of his house. From his vantage point near the patio, the

pool appeared to be empty. "My Lord! Look what Roy has done!" he exclaimed. When he came closer, he saw the water that remained in the pool. Without looking at the disciple who was working on the garage wall, he told him to get the pump and finish draining the pool.

Some of my most memorable occasions during those desert visits with Master were the early evening hours when he walked around the perimeter of the property and invited me to walk with him. If he noticed a scrap of paper on the ground, he would ask me to retrieve it. From time to time, when he saw a small stone, he would kick it a few feet ahead of him, as a child might do for amusement. Sometimes we walked in silence. At other times he would talk about God and the gurus and invite my questions.

During one of our walks, he directed my attention to a nearby mountain. "Most people who see that mountain see a only mass of soil and rock," he said. "When I look at it, I see God."

After we had walked in silence for several minutes, he asked me if I had any questions.

"How many saints, who are mentioned in your book (*Autobiography of a Yogi*), are fully liberated?" I inquired.

His response was immediate. "Not many. Many saints are so satisfied with the bliss of God-communion that they don't aspire to go beyond that stage."

After a pause, he said, "*You* must go all the way."

During one of my early visits with him, a seemingly casual, yet transformative, incident occurred. Before going to Twenty Nine Palms, I had experienced occasional pains in my chest and left arm, usually after a day of strenuous physical work.

While we were talking, he inquired, "How are your parents?" Before he finished speaking, misinterpreting his question as, "How is your pain?" I impulsively responded, "It's not too bad now, sir."

With an expression of concern on his face, he asked, "What's